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THE

LIFE

OF

DARCY, LADY MAXWELL,

OF POLLOCK;

LATE OF EDINBURGH:

COMPILED FROM HER

Voluminous Diary and Correspondence,

AND FROM OTHER

AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS.

BY THE REV. JOHN LANCASTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

"My own heart has been so much edified, and animated, by what I have read in the Memoirs of persons who have been eminent for wisdom and piety, that I cannot but wish the treasure may be more and more increased; and I would hope that the world may gather the like valuable fruits from the LIFE I am now attempting." DODDRIDGE.—*Life of Col. Gardiner.*

——"Whose FAITH follow, considering the end of their conversation." PAUL.

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THE LIFE OF
DARCY, LADY MAXWELL.

1782.

Correspondence with Lady Hope—Diary continued.

LETTER XXX.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

January 11, 1782.

I RECEIVED my dear Daughter's note with the inclosed, and would sooner have acknowledged it, but have hardly been able till this day. I had much bodily indisposition when at B——n, and have suffered much more since; yet in spite of both I had no cause to regret my being there; having had a remarkable display of the goodness of my God, and such a striking proof of his being the hearer of prayer, as led me in my way home, though unwell, to magnify the Lord, and to rejoice in him as the God of my salvation: and though, since, I have been partly confined to bed, and brought low in body by pain and sickness, yet a sweet savour of it remains on my mind. In the night seasons the Lord made his word the food of my soul; sleeping and waking it filled

my mind; and to-day, through mercy, my pain is much abated, and I feel much disposed to abide in prayer for myself and friends. The Lord appeared willing to grant all I asked. O the depth of Divine love! Surely if I was not to praise the Lord, the very stones of the field might cry out against me. I feel weak and helpless in myself, but see an ocean of love and goodness in God and in Christ, to which I am welcome to have constant recourse, and out of that fulness to receive by faith *all* I stand in need of. O for power to improve to the *utmost* the rich privileges to which, as believers, we are entitled. And, O for power to live more to God! I seem as a mere dwarf in religion, swimming upon the surface instead of sinking into all the depths of humble love, and rising up to all the life of God. May the Lord make us all more in earnest! I write freely, knowing that neither *matter* nor *motive* will be mistaken. May you, and our friend, experience a remarkable increase of every grace of the Holy Spirit, prays

Your affectionate parent in Jesus, D. M.

LETTER XXXI.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Saughton Hall,
Friday Afternoon, Jan. 25, 1782.

As it was late before your servant called, I did not like to detain him, and therefore sent only a verbal return to your kind inquiries. I write now, hoping you will get this to-morrow.

I am sorry you should be alone, and that I am confined at home, indeed mostly to my chamber. I am, through mercy, much better, but still feel a soreness in my throat, and have a small degree of cough; and the weather, at present, is so severe, that, without some care, I am afraid of longer confinement.

I cannot think of your going abroad in this stormy weather: do not risk coming here till it is milder. The Lord, I trust, will be with you, and supply your every want. May you have sweet access to a throne of grace through the blood of sprinkling; a power to roll your every burthen upon the Lord, and find him so sustaining you as to prevent your being moved; then your hours will pass sweetly on. May Jesus converse with you; and, as the PRINCE of *Life*, increase your *life*; and, as the Prince of Peace, cause your peace to flow as a river. O what blessings are you entitled to, through your union with him! Peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, perseverance therein unto the end! These are a few of them, but who can tell them all! And, in eternity, when pain, and sorrow, and sin are done away, what glorious things await you! O dwell on these things, that the high praises of your God may continually be in your mouth, and his love in your heart; then will your every moment be devoted to him.

He, in tender love, often tries you with pains and weakness; but the rod is gentle. He means you to come more purified out of every furnace,

and as the burning bush, to flourish unconsumed in fire. I am glad you are better both in body and mind. Be strong, and the Lord will strength afford. *Fear* is your besetting weakness; strive against it; it is very hurtful to the soul. When low, and tempted to distrust, O fly *then* close to Jesus, and he will cover you from your foes, and keep you as in the hollow of his hand! His tenderness and kindness to his people is more than we can conceive. O, Jesus, what in thy love possess we not! Cast all your cares upon him; spread all your wants before him; and he will guide and comfort you here, and fix you at last in never-ending joys, unspeakable and full of glory.

I hope Lady G. will not be long from you, nor suffer by her labour of love to the old man. May the Lord give him his soul for a prey! May we improve to the utmost the years, months, or days, that shall yet be allowed us, and at last have an abundant entrance ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our God and Saviour. Till then I remain,

My dear daughter's affectionate parent in the Lord, D. M.

LETTER XXXII.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

March 16, 1782.

From my feelings, both asleep and awake, for some time past, I suspected my dear daughter was not well, either in body or mind, or both; and her letter of yesterday confirms my suspicions.

What a mercy that all our trials, in soul and body, are under the direction of a God of love, the Father of our beloved Saviour, in whom we are, through abounding mercy, accepted. We have reason, then, to trust all shall be over-ruled for our good, however, in the mean time, painful; if we are not giving way to any thing contrary to the word and will of God. We cannot cleave too closely to Christ, nor believe too firmly upon him, nor expect too much from him. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." But the prevalence of *temptation*, as well as *sin*, will weaken this confidence; and it is highly needful, for our own peace, to advert to this circumstance. They *err* greatly, who make either *duties*, or *frames*, the *foundation* of their acceptance with God: yet the former is indispensably necessary, and the latter is very desirable—is our privilege, and is also *evidential* of a thriving soul. Many of the children of God sink into a careless and supine spirit by paying too little regard to their frames, when, perhaps, they only desire to be preserved from building upon them: hereby satan lays a snare for them, which they fall into unawares. But from this my dear daughter, I trust, will be saved, and from every other snare of the enemy, and thus be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto full salvation. Nervous complaints much depress the mind.

I had intended to be out at this time, but a new cold, and the severity of the weather, have made me unwillingly give up the thoughts of it:

from your situation I should be doubtful whether it be proper for you either; this is a very trying month. May the Lord direct you! and whether at home or abroad, may he enliven and refresh you with the smiles of his reconciled countenance.

I have hopes that the Lord has heard my repeated cries to him for a proper teacher. When I have more time and health, will give you particulars. *Fear not,* all will be well. So hopes, so believes, so prays, my dear daughter,
Your ever affectionate parent in the Lord, D.M.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

March 29, 1782.

My last was sealed and sent to town before your servant called. I see by your short letter that you are in heaviness through manifold temptations. As to your apprehensions about Lady G. I believe it is a device of satan to distress you, and think you should strive against it.* But as nothing happens to the children of God, whether joyous or grievous, but from which he means they should reap benefit; it might turn out to your spiritual advantage if you would carry it frequently to the Lord, and endeavour to plead *earnestly* that the *end* he has in view, by permitting it, may

* A fear that her friend was about to be removed by death.

be *fully* answered. This might be the means of your obtaining entire victory, if it be a temptation: and supposing the worst, still this is the best way to get the mind comforted, fortified, and sweetly reconciled to the Divine will. O what cannot the power of grace effect in the human heart? It can make us even *rejoice* to give up our Isaacs, when called to it. Believe this firmly, and then you will so trust in the Lord as not to be afraid of evil tidings; your heart will be fixed. We should be much aware of anticipating evil, it is fraught with many hurtful consequences; it embitters present enjoyments; it weakens faith, love, trust; it grieves the Holy Spirit, nourishes unbelief, and leads to discontent. Do you not remember how strongly you were tempted, some years ago, to believe your own death was at hand: the impression, you said, was strong, but you saw afterwards that it was only temptation. If we have a friend that we can trust, it is of great use to mention our temptations; this is often, by the blessing of the Lord, made the means of breaking their power. I know this by experience. May you prove it so at present! Your affectionate parent, D. M.

The following Extracts from the DIARY will enable the reader to form a proper estimate of the state of her Ladyship's mind and heart at the close of this year.

"September 25. In the course of these last two

weeks I have felt variously. I have, at times, had seasons of refreshing; sweet proofs that God is the hearer of prayer. I have had strong desires after entire devotedness of heart and life to God; have been drawn out to plead for the full accomplishment of the promises in my own soul, with much longing for that happy time; and have waited for it with a degree of fainting, because so long deferred. I have thought, surely the promises of a faithful God cannot fail; yet, wherefore is it so long before he appears in my behalf. I have feared lest I had any sinful hand in it, and have been grieved, because I seem to live to so little purpose; doing so little for God, for others, or for myself. I have hoped that every returning day would have made a happy change. I have been happy when any opportunity was put in my power of doing good, and rejoiced as one that found great spoil: though even herein, upon a strict scrutiny, I have been very unfaithful. In short, I am a mystery to myself; and were it not that I have the express promise of a faithful God, on which to depend for a great increase in my own soul, and for an *enlarged sphere of usefulness*, I should almost despair of things being better with me than they are at present. But surely the heavens and the earth shall sooner fail, than one word that he hath spoken fall to the ground. Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.

October 11. Still I have much cause to say, "my leanness, my leanness." Yet, I must also

say, I have much cause to record the loving-kindness of the Lord. Since my last date, my visits from on high have been more frequent. I have felt more sweetness flowing from a sense of the presence of Christ, who has been very near and precious. O, were he always thus with me, my heaven, in one sense, would be complete! He is my all in all. The Lord has greatly enlarged my sphere of usefulness in a way I did not expect; and at first I felt a degree of reluctance, fearing my unfaithfulness: but I am now sweetly reconciled to it, and have cause to praise the Lord, who has strengthened me to do what he called me to, and what I feared. O for a grateful heart! He gives me also to feel, in the present case, that the way of duty is the way not only of safety, but of comfort and strength. He does all things well. He has laid his hand gently upon my body, and again removed the rod, and disappointed my fears. He has also refreshed my spirits by good accounts from afar; from a very particular friend, who, I hope, has been his mouth to me. Lord, thou knowest I would not willingly mistake the way in which thou wouldst have me to walk. I look to thee to confirm this matter to me, that I may rest assured I am doing what is well pleasing to thee. I have this day, (Friday) as usual, renewed my engagements to be the Lord's; though not with all that life and joy I aim at, yet with more sweetness than usual. I feel strong desires to live up to them, to the very utmost; and this for the sake of others, as

well as myself. Lord, do thou enable me to be faithful.

—— 25. Still, because my God is good, I experience, in a measure, his loving-kindness. In the course of these two weeks he has been gracious to me in various ways: he has carried me through trials; strengthened me for doing and suffering his will; made me feel more profit and comfort from the word preached than for some time before; given me to experience more emptiness in the creature than usual; and also made me willing it should be so, if he saw meet; provided I might enjoy a proportionable sweetness in himself. He has strengthened my body to undergo more fatigue than usual, without being hurt by it. He has made me also to feel how good it is for me to make all my wants known to him by prayer; with all my hopes, fears, and desires; for I keep nothing from my God. He more and more leads me in this way, and I praise him for it. O the privilege of prayer! He also tenderly warns me when danger is near, and causes me to cry to himself.

November 9. I again take up my pen to testify of the goodness of my God. Since my last date he has given refreshing seasons; sometimes in public, sometimes in secret, and sensibly assisted me in family duties. He has permitted me to be brought into many difficulties, in order to shew his power in supporting me under them, and his goodness in delivering me from them. I have met with most unexpected trials within these two

weeks, and have been driven, in some measure, into extremity; but this hath been the Lord's opportunity. I cried unto him, and he kept my mind staid on himself. In the midst of various trials he has made me sit calm on tumult's wheel. From the comfort I felt, I doubted trials were at hand: it proved so, but I also proved the Lord a strong hold in the day of trouble. Nature *felt* and *suffered*, but grace *sustained* the conflict. He gave me to feel composure, serenity, and comfort in his house of prayer. O that it may be a prelude to greater enjoyments! But he makes me more and more sensible I am nothing, and have nothing, but what he bestows; and this keeps me dependant upon himself, for which I praise him. He also still shews me what I lack, but surrounds me with promises for all I can stand in need of. I will extol thee, O God, my King, for ever and ever: while I have a being I will praise my God.

—— 21. *Gardiner's Hall.* I left *Saughton Hall* the 14th, a place where the Lord permitted me to be tried with great and sore inward conflicts, but out of which he also, in a great measure, delivered me; a place wherein he gave me, in much mercy, to know him, times without number, as a God that heareth prayer, both for myself and others. He also afforded frequent opportunities of attempting to do good to others, by having the gospel preached in my house; by the distribution of religious tracts among the people, and by conversing with many individuals upon the

concerns of their immortal souls. However feeble the attempts, if the Lord give his blessing, they shall not be in vain. Saughton Hall was a place to which I was much attached; but when the Lord called me to leave it, he enabled me cheerfully to give it up, and perhaps I may see more clearly afterwards his reasons for calling me out of it: at present, I am satisfied with my situation. His presence constitutes my heaven in every place. May he enable me to love him more, and serve him better in this place, than ever I have yet done. Then I shall indeed have reason to praise him for the change. I have much cause to bless him for carrying me through much hurry, fatigue, and a variety of scenes, without suffering by it; and for giving me, since I came here, health of body, intercourse with his people, the privilege of repeatedly entering his house of prayer, and also some opportunities of acting for him, though my spiritual comforts have not been so great.

December 19. Friday. Words fail to express my obligations to the Lord. Since Wednesday, last week, I have had gracious seasons, both when alone and when with others. When Jesus smiles, my heaven is begun; and of late he has been present and precious. He is the sacred source from whence spring my chiefest joys. I long to prove his utmost salvation, and fulness of love; to be lost in that ocean of love, that neither knows bottom nor shore.

—— 22. This also has been a precious day.

My fellowship has been with the Father and the Son from morning to night. I have felt wrapt up in Jesus, and proved him such a source of calm repose as I cannot easily express. How poor and trifling does all created good appear, when thus highly favoured of God. He in mercy keeps me keenly sensible of my weakness, while he lets me feel where my strength lies, and makes me aware of my danger. As it respects *spiritual pride*, my soul trembles at the thought. I fly to the feet of Jesus, and there I am safe.

1783.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

January 3. My God has seen meet to conduct me to the beginning of a new year, and with an unusual measure of bodily health. I was enabled to wait upon him in public very late on the last night of the last year, and early on the first day of this; neither of which I had been privileged to do for many years. A painful languor has rested on my mind for some little time. I have no condemnation, but experience a keen conviction of my want of more spiritual life. I see and feel the necessity of drawing near to God. Indeed

he has so moulded my spirit, that if I do not enjoy comfort in him, I cannot find it in any thing else. Long since he inclined me to flee from the world lest I should be hurt by it, and also because I had no relish for it; so that I am thankful to say, I have no proper source of comfort but in himself. When, therefore, I feel at a distance from him, I am all an aching void, and am entirely out of my element. I also grieve from day to day that my sphere of usefulness remains so contracted. My desires to act for God are constant and vigorous; and his promises for this are many and extensive; but "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." The aspect of Providence has long in this respect appeared to oppose my wishes and expectations, hence arises my grief: but I would chide my unbelief. Surely the promises of a faithful God shall not, cannot fail. Upon a review of the last year, I perceive this has been my complaint during the whole of it; yet I trust I have been kept thirsting after all the life of God, and for the full accomplishment of all the precious promises he has given in my behalf. Hasten, Lord, the happy time.

—— 22. I have lately been favoured with a more ardent spirit of prayer than almost ever formerly: my whole soul seemed to struggle into God, and to pant keenly after the full accomplishment of the promises. I was in great hopes that the time to favour me was come; for I felt as though I could not live at such a distance from God, was made astonished and ashamed at my

past unfaithfulness and unprofitableness, and amazed that the Lord had borne with me so long. For some days past this keen edge has been blunted, and is succeeded by a degree of languor. My constant desire is, for the full enjoyment of the blessing of sanctification; and I would always be at a throne of grace: but when there, I do not enjoy that spirit of fervent supplication as lately; nay, all my kindling ardours die away, and I remain uneasy and restless. O to enter into a permanent rest, where all is light, life, and power! O to be all praise, all love, and all activity! My desires after more extensive usefulness continue, and recently the Lord favoured me with new opportunities, and afforded me power to embrace them. I feel the will of my God to be precious, and desire in all things to be conformed to it.

February 14. I have had a small revival, but it does not prove lasting. On Monday evening my heart was softened, my mind serene, and a degree of sweetness was diffused throughout my soul. The following day, this increased; and the Lord shewed me clearly the state of my soul, and convinced me that part of my suffering had arisen from a partial ignorance respecting it. While I painfully thought the work of grace was at a stand, the Lord was in fact carrying it on, though not in that joyous way I wished; but by giving me a general and constant view of the shortness of time, and the infinite value of eternity, thereby making all earthly and transient

things appear very poor and little indeed. This is an important lesson. O that I may learn it fully! then all other things will be easily set right.

—— 28. Still I have cause to complain; still I am far from possessing that degree of spiritual life, which I know to be my privilege. Since my last I have enjoyed tastes of the goodness of God, but they were too short to satisfy. I have felt a sensible increase of hungering after the whole image of God; the want of a full possession of this, has pained my inmost soul: but I am again in a measure sinking from this ardour, and it is succeeded by a degree of languor which alarms me. When shall I be all I wish? Secret prayer is the means from which I derive the greatest benefit at present. I do indeed prove this to be a special privilege: I could not live without it, though I do not always find comfort in it. I still ardently desire an enlarged sphere of usefulness, and find it comfortable to embrace the opportunities afforded me, though alas! I am not so faithful herein as I ought to be. O what great things hath God promised and prepared for his children even here! Why should I come so far short?

March 12. I would with gratitude acknowledge the goodness of my God, who, for the two last weeks, has given me more reason, than for some time, to conclude that he is carrying on his work in my soul, and with much freedom from painful temptation and inward conflicts. He has, with the return of spring, given me a

fresh spring of heavenly affections; sweetly alluring me to himself, and constraining me to yield up all the affectionate powers of my heart to him, with whom true joys abound. *There* I would centre all my happiness; from that sacred source I would draw all my consolation. I have been favoured with the sweet and sensible presence of my God, especially this last week, both in public and private, but particularly in secret prayer. In the house of God, my views of a happy eternity have been truly delightful. For about two hours last week, I felt most keenly, from a fear that I had grieved the Spirit of God; but the Lord in mercy removed my distress, and comforted me. He shews me that my works are not perfect; clearly sets before me how much more closely I may walk with him: how much more glory I may bring to him; and if I can judge of the feelings of my heart, I should esteem it my richest privilege to give him each precious moment as it flies, and to prove the utmost power of transforming grace.

—— 14. Still my God is good. Last night, in the chapel, it was indeed a time of love. God the Father, and Son, drew near; surrounded me with their peaceful presence, and filled my soul,—not with rapturous joy, but with a silent heaven of love. The Divine attraction felt so strong, that, like the concentrated rays of the sun, my every power and faculty seemed united and fixed on God. I felt sweetly sinking into him, and enjoyed most delightful and extensive views of

holiness. I experience to-day, as one blessed effect of this heavenly visitation, an increasing power to take up my cross, to deny myself, and to follow the Lord.

—— 26. This morning, while I was conversing with some persons that love God, Jesus drew near, and filled my soul with sweet surprise. When he is nigh, sorrow and care fly far away. Throughout the day, he at different times appeared to the eye of my faith as altogether lovely: yet my enemies pushed hard at me, and one temptation for some time prevailed. But, O, with what desire did I breathe after pure and perfect love; that Jesus might more fully possess my heart, and felt willing to part with all for this. For some time, my hungering and thirsting after entire devotedness to God, have been abundantly increased: yet I have also felt depressed with a sense of my unprofitableness. O that the Lord would enlarge my sphere of usefulness. I long to be active for God, and useful to my fellow-creatures. I have the promise of a faithful God for this; but the time seems long delayed. O that now he would do as he hath spoken.

May 23. *Coates.* Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day, witnessing that he is good. Since my last date, I have had severe and unexpected trials, but the Lord has brought me through. O that I could add, with glory to his Name, and with profit to my own soul: but alas! herein I am still defective. I have also enjoyed many mercies. O that I could say, they

produced all that warmth of gratitude they were calculated to do; but herein also I greatly fail. In very many respects I am a wonder to myself. When will my complainings cease? I am weary of them. When shall I be all love and all praise? The Lord brought me to this place on the 16th instant, through many difficulties: it has been mostly a season of trial ever since, yet mingled with many mercies. At Gardener's house, from whence I came, I had much cause to speak of the goodness of the Lord; and here also I expect his tender mercies will follow me. O that I may be endued with power to glorify *him*, however it may fare with *me*.

June 6. Since my last date, the Lord has appeared remarkably in my behalf, and has wrought out for me a great temporal deliverance. His goodness astonished me; and his faithfulness, which shone conspicuously in this affair, confirms my trust in him for future mercies: but yet this *lively sense* of his kindness does not prove so lasting as it ought. O I much need more grace! For some weeks past, I have been harassed with worldly matters, which have occupied much of my time, and I fear injured my mind; at least, damped my spiritual ardour. I hope the bustle is now nearly over. O that I may, a thousand times more than ever, *centre in God;* feel calm repose in the bosom and blood of Jesus, and be all for JEHOVAH.

—— 13. My soul is made very desirous of an enlarged sphere of action for God: the language

of my heart is, *what shall I do for God?* I have cried to him repeatedly, that he would put some work in my hand, and I think he has pointed out one or two ways wherein I may be of some use to his cause and people. He has given me strong convictions, since I came here, of the shortness and uncertainty of time—of the unsatisfactory nature of all sublunary good—of the great propriety of using all for him—and of my doing as much as possible during my short life for his cause. May his grace enable me to reduce these lessons to practice: may I enjoy more of his love in my heart. He has in mercy lately warned me of danger, where I was not suspecting any; and stimulated me to cry to him, to be preserved from whatever would grieve his Spirit, or in the least injure my own soul."

While Lady Maxwell was thus intensely desiring an enlarged sphere of usefulness for herself, she continued to stimulate her friends to go forward with their works of faith and labours of love. The following letters must not be omitted.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, June 19, 1783.

I had both my dear daughter's letters, and would have answered the first sooner, but have

had people staying in my house for some days, to whom I gave a good deal of my time, fondly hoping it might be of some use to them. Besides, I have not been so well for the last two weeks, and, on Sunday, was only out about two hours to the West Church, which was a time of refreshing. Mr. Jones and Mr. Groves were no small addition; both seemed alive, and in general it appeared to be a good time. I hope Mr. G— will be of use at Edinburgh, multitudes attend his preaching. He was with me yesterday, when we had some profitable conversation. O that the Lord would give a fresh commission to many of his ministering servants, that his word may run and have free course, that multitudes may fall down under the power of it, and our God be glorified, from the rising to the setting sun. How desirable is it to be in any way instrumental in promoting this great work. Time is flying, men are dying, and eternity hastens on. This is not our rest, we must not expect it here; let us then be willing to embrace every inconveniency the Lord may see meet to lay in our way; let us live as pilgrims, hastening home to our glorious rest, and endeavouring to take as many with us as we can. We have hitherto lived at a poor dying rate, much beneath our privileges; let the time past more than suffice; let us now arise and lay aside every weight, look continually to Jesus, and live by faith upon him, and we shall find wonders done in his holy Name, both for ourselves and others.

I am glad Lady G— is getting better; I hope

the Lord has much to do for her, and with her, before she takes possession of that inheritance that fadeth not away. With my love, tell her, I had all her letters, and lost no time in doing what she wished me; but the person she mentioned was gone out of town, not to return till this night, when I hope to give him the information she desired; and on Monday, I hope to be able to give her some account of the matter. Mrs. N— is much as usual, rather stirred up by Mr. G—. Scarlet fevers are prevailing in town, and a putrid one at Dunbar; but when will the inhabitants learn righteousness.

I wish I could provide you with a proper maid, but it is a difficult matter; you have my prayers for it, and if I hear of one, will let you know. *Prayer* can procure all things that is for our good. O what cause of thankfulness is it, that we have a gracious God to go to on all occasions. Use and enjoy this privilege, and you can never be miserable. You want more faith; cry mightily for it, and stir up the gift of God that is in you, and let not the power of temptation obscure that comfortable light it is the will of God you should walk in, or weaken that strength of which you are possessed in virtue of your union with the Lord of life and glory. May the Lord set you free, and keep you so, and enable you more than ever to spend and be spent in his cause. So prays, my dear daughter, your affectionate parent, D. M.

LETTER XXXV.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, July 8, 1783.

How is my dear daughter since she arrived at Moffot? May I hope better both in body and mind? It is surely a great evil to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think; but I judge it is also a loss not to form a *just* estimate of ourselves. It is the opinion of one of our English Poets, that the part we act in life bears an exact proportion to the judgment we form of ourselves; that we never shall attempt any thing great, either for God or man, if we think very meanly of ourselves. This sentiment, though it came from the pen of a man that I believe had no religion, yet properly qualified, it is truth. In *one sense* we cannot think too meanly of ourselves; but in another, I think we may, and I believe the adversary of souls has a hand in it; for while he persuades us that we are so poor and despicable, we can do nothing; he means thereby to cut asunder the very sinews of our active endeavours for the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-creatures. This is a *very subtle* device of satan; by it, many strong ones are rendered weak, and kept useless all their days, when by nature and grace they are formed for extensive usefulness. May the Lord shine into your soul, and give you to know the things

that are freely given you of God, and enable you to use them *all* to his glory, the good of your fellow-creatures, and the comfort of your own soul. I know this is the habitual desire of your heart.

Is there any way which occurs to your mind for the promoting of any, or all of these, in which you could take a more *active part* than you have hitherto done? I think it would be of use to you. Your nerves and spirits are, I think, very weak at present; see that you do *all* you can in your present situation for strengthening them. O get free from *unnecessary* cares, and from taking too great a weight of even *necessary* ones. Fear nothing; neither persons, places, nor things. It is our privilege to have but *one desire*—that is, to please God; and but *one fear*—lest we should offend him. This brings much sweet liberty into the soul. May you feel it so!

I shall be glad to hear soon from you, with many particulars about yourself, and our dear friend, and also of Lady J. Many thanks for the bottle you sent me. I am much as when you saw me. I wrote Lady G. last night, but forgot to give her my address. Most people continue my old one, *Princess-street*, and my letters always come safe. In every place and situation I continue, my dear daughter,

Your affectionate parent, D. M."

LETTER XXXVI.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, July 24th, 1783.

My dear daughter's letter of the 16th I did not receive till the 23d, owing to Miss N—'s being out of town. I began to fear that either Lady G— or you was not well. Both letters were most acceptable, and agreeable. By your desire I write soon. I am glad the visits you mention are over, and the hurry and agitation occasioned by them subsiding. I would almost say, it is a great mercy when we are hurt by worldly company, (I do not mean sinfully so); it is a great preservative against mixing too much with it, and a loud call to avoid it, as much as is consistent with the will of God, and our duty.

I perceive, by your letter, that you are suffering both in body and mind from different causes; some of which have often proved a source of distress to you. O that the Lord would teach you to depend more upon himself, and to be less attached to the creature. Indeed, it is your privilege to be free and disentangled from *all*, to give them all up to God, and to *leave* them *there*. This will secure to you the true enjoyment of them; but this victory the power of sovereign grace alone can give, and it is more difficult to some tempers than others. The more you love God, the more easy you will find it

to trust him with whatever is dearest to you, whether persons or things; and the greater degree of sweet liberty you will feel in your own soul.

There is nothing so hurtful to the nervous system, as anxiety; it preys upon the vitals, and weakens the whole frame; and, what is worse than all, it grieves the Holy Spirit. But I hope you will be made conqueror over that, and every other foe, and prove God's utmost salvation and fulness of love: then you will find, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Then you will be better able to commit not only your own way, but the way of those you love unto the Lord, and to trust in him that he will bring it to pass: then you will see cause to praise him, when he has wrought that work that caused your needless fears. I feel inclined to say, "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" Wherefore dost thou fear from day to day? for thyself and others, and where is there any just cause for fear? "The Lord God Omnipotent *reigneth*," and this God is your God, and the God of your dear friend, and he will be the guide of both even unto death. His faithfulness is a constant shield and buckler to both: you may have access every moment, for counsel and direction from him, and you are surrounded with his promises for time and eternity. You have no views in life but to glorify God and to enjoy him; how then can you entertain one shadow of a doubt, that the Lord will not shine upon your path, and lead you into all his holy will? O, my dear,

madam, see your privileges, and live up to them, and say, with the poet,

> "Away my unbelieving fears,
> Fear shall no more in me have place."

When the Lord answers *our prayers*, he often thwarts *our inclinations*, and by leading us into *all his* holy will, he most frequently crosses *our own*. But these are sacrifices he expects we will offer up to him. All Lady G—'s exercises will, I trust, terminate as you and I could wish, in her own good, and that of others. You may assist her much, by your prayers, your counsel, and your ready and cheerful acquiescence in whatever she has reason to believe is the will of God concerning her. I rejoice in the good accounts from London. O that the work of the Lord may increase in all places: may his kingdom come, and his will be done; and may we be permitted, and honoured, to throw in our mite also; may all we have and are be devoted to God. How does Lady I— go on? Believe me ever your affectionate parent, D. M."

The Lord had important work in reversion for his pious handmaid, and he was now gradually preparing her to engage in it, with all the spiritual ardour of a primitive Christian. The intensity of desire breathed forth in many of the following extracts, and the victorious faith mani-

fested throughout, until she received "the accomplishment of the promises," are truly remarkable.

"July 27. Since the 13th, I have experienced a small increase; a keener edge upon my spirit;—a sharper appetite for spiritual food;—a greater standing alone with God;—a fuller emptying of created good;—a deeper conviction of the shortness of time, and the awful importance of eternity;—with an increase of love to God, sweetness in duty, and more ardent desires to be wholly employed for him. Still my God continues his goodness to me, with regard to secret prayer, allowing me liberty to pour out all my heart to him; to cast all my cares upon him; and to spread all my wants before him. How very often do I prove him to be a God that heareth prayer. I have been lately favoured with some precious instances of this; of his care over me in preserving me in the time of danger, and in providing for my safety when I thought not of it.

September 12. Upon a strict review of what has passed within, and without, during the last month, I have cause to record the goodness of my God in very many respects; yet my comforts have run in so low a channel, that I seem to have but little to say. One thing I must observe, that if spiritual consolations have been small, inward conflicts and outward trials have also been few. I have felt a keener edge upon my spirit, strong

desires after all the life of God, and for power to glorify him in a more active and useful way. He has enabled me to be much in prayer for the accomplishment of the promises, though with little comfort; yet at times, I have been brought into extremity: seeing all outward helps failing; no opening in Providence for extensive usefulness; no immediate answers to prayer in respect to this particular. Besides the removal of those that were helpful to me by prayer and conference, some to Abraham's bosom,—others turned seemingly aside—all these things appear against me, and tend to discourage me; so that at times I have been sorely perplexed. Yet in the midst of these trials, I have been upheld by an Almighty power, and still hope not one word shall fail of all the good things which God hath promised. Though in a great measure I stand alone, and have done so for some time, I am enabled to believe that the Lord is *able* to make me *stand*, and that he will perfect what concerns me; though destitute of various helps which I once enjoyed. Even so, Amen.

October 3. Still my soul is vexed with a partial distance from God; still he delays his coming in the full accomplishment of the promises: still the means of grace are comparatively unprofitable, and at times I feel the fiery darts of satan. It is an emptying season. Yet the Lord frequently answers my prayers with regard to temporal things, from which I derive encouragement; but it is spiritual blessings I long for: a

healthful soul, and a useful life. This God hath promised. And though at present a sable cloud envelopes me, I will still wait, and hope, and believe to the end. O to be all alive to God; to possess a heart flaming with Divine love; and a life shining with every grace of the Holy Spirit. For *these* I would despise crowns and sceptres. Lord, grant me all I want, for Christ's sake, and I will praise thee in time and through eternity."

Lady M—, at this time, suffered from a degree of uncertainty respecting the work of grace in her heart. She had not yet publicly professed *entire sanctification*, but at times believed that she enjoyed the blessing: at other seasons, she was perplexed with doubts, and was led to fear that those doubts were occasioned by her not humbly declaring, "what God had done for her soul." That she might be delivered from this state of uncertainty, she solicited an interest in the prayers of her friends.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

October 18, 1783.

I wrote dear Miss Ritchie many months ago, and hope it is not want of health which prevents my having an answer. If entirely convenient, should be glad to be assured of this by her own pen.

For some time past, a painful degree of uncertainty has rested upon my experience. I feel

afraid of drawing any certain conclusion concerning the present state of my soul; lest, on the one hand, I deny what the Lord has done for me; or, on the other, presume on what he has not given. On this account, I suffer a good deal of distress, and feel much inclined, if you will permit me, to ask the assistance of your prayers in a *particular manner*; that the Lord would cause his heavenly light to shine bright into my soul, and thereby scatter every cloud, and do away all degree of painful doubt: that I may know the things freely given me of God; and be enabled to give him the glory, and take the comfort to myself. The fiery darts of the enemy I feel at times keenly pointed: you know, I doubt not, the *sharp distress* these occasion. I trust, all I feel is in mercy, and will be over-ruled for good; but I long much for deliverance, if agreeable to the Divine will. The Lord has given me exceeding great and precious promises, for all I can want both for soul, body, and outward estate; in time, and through eternity: many of which he has accomplished; but the delay of the rest often proves a source of the most painful sensations. I long to be fully established in God's utmost salvation; to be firm as a wall of brass, and as an iron pillar strong. Surely this is his will concerning me. Do, then, dear Miss Ritchie, plead earnestly that I may stand perfect and complete in it; and thereby you will greatly oblige, your affectionate friend, in the bonds of the gospel, D. MAXWELL."

Such precaution is highly praise-worthy, and deserves to be imitated by all the people of God. A few more extracts from the Diary will conduct to the end of this year.

"October 29. The Lord hath appeared in my behalf, and sent me help from his holy hill, for which I desire to bless him. Last Saturday, he gave me a little reviving in my bondage; and on the succeeding Sabbath, I felt his power, tasted his goodness, and proved his faithfulness. While the enemy was attempting to pour in as a flood, he lifted up a standard; disarmed satan of his malicious power, and armed me with Divine strength. In spite of all opposition, I was enabled to stand still, and see the salvation of God. Since hen, I have enjoyed more comfort, more sweetness in prayer, and vigorous desires to be all for God. Immediately before this revival, I felt *stripped* of *all*, except a power to call on the Lord; and, indeed, my heart and flesh cried out for the living God, but this was in the absence of every *joyous sensation*. Truly God is good to Israel, and though at times he may tarry long, he will avenge his own elect, who night and day cry unto him.

November 19. Since my last date, I have had seasons of trial and of consolation. Last week was a time of severe temptation. I scarcely knew to which hand to turn; yet, in the midst of all, through mercy, I was enabled to cry mightily to

God, and he has heard and sent me deliverance. Yesterday, while conversing with some of his children on religious subjects, he made it a season of refreshing from his presence, both to myself and others. God, the Father and Son, were clear to the eye of my faith; and all within was peace and serenity. This happy frame continued through the day; and to-day, though much tempted, my God is sensibly with me.

December 2. This has truly been a precious day: from morning to night, my peace has flowed as a river. In conversation, the Lord has suggested profitable matter, and given ability to express it. At times my pen, and tongue, move freely; at others, I feel a total incapacity, and labour under a painful stagnation of thought: this convinces me, that the power to use either to purpose, comes from the Lord. Indeed the further I go in the Divine life, the more conscious I am of my entire dependance upon God, and that it is so affords me peculiar pleasure. He is daily teaching me more simplicity of spirit; makes me willing to receive all as his unmerited gift; and to call upon him for every thing I need, *as I need it;* and he supplies my wants according to existing exigencies. I perceive I have no stock in myself, on which to depend; every new service demands a fresh supply, and my God is good, and sends me grace to help in the *time of need.* Much of his goodness I have tasted this day, in secret and social prayer, in conversation, and in meditation. The Lord has also lately re-

moved much bodily indisposition. O that health, time, talents, wealth, influence, *all*, may be used for him. While my God is thus blessing me, the enemy is very busy, varying his temptations, and applying them most powerfully, where perhaps I am weakest: so that, though happy in God, I have almost trembled for fear of their consequences. My only security is in looking to Jesus; but here I obtain relief.

—— 22. This has also been a precious day. My fellowship has been with the Father and Son from morning to night. I have felt wrapt up in Jesus, and found him such a source of calm repose as I cannot express. How trifling and insignificant does all created good appear, when I am thus highly favoured of God. He, in mercy, keeps me sensible of my weakness, while he lets me know where lies my strength; and makes me aware of spiritual pride: my soul trembles at the thought of that dreadful evil. I fly to the feet of Jesus, and there I am safe.

1784.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

January 1. Upon a retrospect of the past year, I find my obligations to God are exceedingly great. Many, very many have been the times of refreshing I have had from him. How many my temporal and spiritual deliverances! and O, how numerous the answers of prayer with which I have been favoured. My communion with heaven has been sensibly increased; and, times without number, he has made me sensible of the accomplishment of a promise, powerfully impressed on my mind, several years ago;—that when I was converted I should strengthen the brethren. In some temporal affairs, he has most wonderfully manifested his goodness in my behalf; and, on many difficult occasions, strengthened and enabled me to confess him before others. Language fails to express what he has done for me; indeed it beggars all expression. I will extol thee, O God, and praise thy name for ever and ever; while I have a being, I will praise thee. Through the whole of last year, I have been kept, panting

after extensive usefulness, and thankful when any opportunity for doing good was granted me. The Lord has also been very good to me in restraining the power of the enemy: spiritual temptations have neither been so strong, nor so numerous, as I have found them in former times. This I esteem a great mercy, for of all sufferings and trials, they are the keenest.

—— 11. *Sunday.* A day much to be remembered. Through difficulties went to Mr. Jones's chapel, where the sacrament was to be dispensed. From the moment I sat down, the Lord began to bless me, and many things in the sermon were comfortable: but on sitting down at the table, my communion with the Father and Son was sensibly deepened: I had certainly a foretaste of the heavenly glory. How sweet and near was my fellowship with the Father: God seemed to surround me with his presence. I was permitted to put up many petitions for myself and others, and for the church. I hope they will be answered. Language fails when I would express my gratitude to the Lord. O that my life may express it.

February 6. Since my last date, I have been comforted, and also severely tried; I have felt the *rod* of God, whereby nature suffered keenly: but I have also proved the *staff* of God supporting me. He in great mercy prepared me for suffering, by an increase of fellowship with himself. How tenderly does he deal with me! In the time of a most unexpected trial, my Jesus drew near,

as if he had said, "Though friends die, I live for ever." Blessed Lord, that is enough. Yet nature feels, animal spirits are weakened, and spiritual temptations have been strong; but in all my God is good.

—— 20. I find my mind for some time past enlarged by the habitual consideration of eternity. These thoughts tend much to rectify the judgement; and when that is fully instructed, the passions are easily adjusted. How contracted are our views, while confined within the limits of time. Here there are no objects in any degree adequate to the vast powers and infinite desires of an immortal soul; but when we contemplate eternity, what a boundless prospect presents itself! What a full scope may we there give to our most extensive views and wishes. There all our holy affections may roam at large, and find abundance of objects perfectly suited in kind and duration, to their nature. O my God, in these glorious regions of bliss and peace, which the gospel brings to light, may I for ever enjoy Thee.

March 4. I have felt very variously in the course of these last thirteen days. At times, painfully exercised in my mind, through the prevalence of spiritual temptations, and the remains of unbelief; these produced keen distress, though through the goodness of God, it was not permitted to continue long. On Saturday last, Jesus drew nigh, rebuked the adversary, disappointed my fears, comforted my soul, and gave me a sweet conviction that God was the hearer of

prayer, answering the petitions I offered up to him. But soon after, the clouds again gathered, and I was distressed. The enemy renewed his attacks; and not perceiving the stratagem, I felt painfully fearful, that it was myself which obstructed the accomplishment of the promises; both those which relate to the prosperity of my own soul, and those which refer to extensive usefulness. This caused poignant sorrow, better felt than expressed. The more so, now my whole soul is bent upon glorifying God: by enjoying him continually in my own soul, and by being active in his cause. But last night, I felt a sweet impression on my mind, and from its effects, I trust it was from the Lord, that the delay, which causes me at times so much distress, was not of myself, but of the Lord; that matters were not yet ripe for the full accomplishment; but that the Lord would, in his own time, bring to pass in me, and by me, what he has promised. This impression wonderfully calmed my mind, removed my painful fears, and led me to trust in the Lord. That impatience, which bordered upon the haste of unbelief, fled away; I was led to see, that I was called to wait patiently, and calmly to hope, that what the Lord had said, he would do.

May 12. For the last three weeks, I have experienced the most intense thirst after an increase of the life of God in my soul, and an enlarged sphere of usefulness. I felt spurred on by strong desire, stimulated by the promises of

God, and strengthened to plead by the spirit of prayer. Yet as no opening in Providence appeared for the latter, and little or no answer in return to the former, my faith was tried to the uttermost. My heart felt ready to break, for the longing it had after God. It seemed as if I could not live, except my prayers were heard and answered, with respect to these two particulars. At length, my God, who is rich in mercy, proved it, by condescending to send me an answer last Sabbath from his holy habitation. In the morning, I went to church, where the ordinance of the supper was to be administered. The words spoken from were,—"Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The text struck me, and I was led to expect something good, yet found nothing remarkable from the sermon. The enemy was now very busy, and my mind felt uncommonly prone to wander from the point in hand: but if the Most High is determined to arise and work, who can hinder? At his holy table, to which I went much agitated, all my wanderings ceased, and God spake with power to my soul. He condescended to unfold to me the seeming mystery of his late dispensations towards me, both in providence and grace. He told me, it was to try my faith, and to prove whether I would continue to follow him through every discouragement, and continue believing his promises, although the aspect of providence contradicted them. He then assured me my faith should prove triumphant, even as the faith of the

woman of Canaan, who continued to plead for her daughter in spite of every discouragement. These gracious words brought amazing strength into my soul; I felt determined, with a Divine fortitude, to cleave unto the Lord, in spite of every opposition; to hope against hope, and patiently to wait upon him, till he saw meet to accomplish the promises. This heavenly frame continued through the day, and in the evening, while in the house of prayer, my God renewed his former kindness: O for a power to retain it. How great is his goodness. Surely it is good to wait upon the Lord, and to trust in him. But lest I should be exalted above measure, the day following, I was confined with severe indisposition of body. On Tuesday morning, I felt a degree of languor of spirit, and confusion of mind, which grieved me. Having to meet with a Christian friend or two, I prayed much for the presence of the Lord to be with us. He heard my cry, and gave me my petition. He made me very sensible of the approach of Deity. While I sung his praises, a reverential consciousness of the Divine presence rested on and animated my soul; God the Father revealed himself to me, and that near and clear view of him has continued with me ever since. How can I sufficiently praise him; I find where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

28. Since the 17th, the Lord has supported me under many trials, some of them most unexpected, and which pierced me to the quick.

He has given me to feel much, very much, of the insipidity of worldly enjoyment, and caused some creature comforts to prove bitterness to me. Though these things wrung my heart with keen anguish, and brought tears from my eyes, yet I found I could, from my inmost soul, bless God for thus dealing with me, because salutary purposes were answered by the painful dispensations. I thus get further from the creature, and nearer to God; convinced he only can make me truly happy. Persons, things, and places, are in themselves empty cisterns, which hold no waters of consolation, but as the Lord pours into them. And if I do not rise and keep above them all, they will pierce me through with many sorrows. My God does all things well. O to be faithful to him! Though thus tried, I have not been left comfortless: the Lord has been good. He still gives me power to hold fast what he has spoken, in spite of satan and every foe. O that he would come quickly, and do as he has said!

June 27. In the course of these seventeen days I have not experienced any very material change. I have had, at various seasons, an increase of the more immediate presence of God; and Jesus has sweetly attracted my heart and affections, by appearing in his native beauty; shining with the milder beams of his mediatorial glory. In him resides the fulness of the Godhead bodily! Deity in its plenitude of power! Comfortable, animating thought! And Jesus is

mine. Amazing mercy! On Sunday week I had an opportunity to sit down at the Lord's table, where I felt my inmost soul pierced with a sense of his goodness. For some days after I was kept praying without ceasing, and was in hopes the time to favour me was come; but to this succeeded two bitter days of outward and inward trials. On Sunday last, through many difficulties, but with strong desire, and great expectation, I entered the house of God. In the former part of the day I was disappointed; in the latter, he whom my soul loveth, drew nigh, and I was comforted. Yesterday my soul felt as if drawn from its centre; my keen relish for Divine things was much lessened, and my comfort greatly abated; yet I was much strengthened to attempt the spiritual benefit of others, by writing, speaking, and giving away books on divinity. These opportunities of doing good were most unexpected; but while thus engaged, the adversary was most assiduous in his attempts to distress; painful temptation for some time prevailed, but by prayer and faith he was conquered.

October 22. In the course of these seven weeks I have too much given way to temptation, by not writing. Satan has recourse to many stratagems to prevent it. He knows it is profitable, and therefore opposes it. I have much cause to bless the Lord for many mercies, spiritual and temporal. Since my last date I have had sweet seasons, many answers to prayer, and power to attempt doing good, in a way not

tried, except twice, since I came here: I mean, having the gospel preached at this place once every week. O that the Lord may smile upon my feeble attempt to glorify him, and give success. My God has been graciously present at my little meeting on Thursday, for prayer, praise, and Christian conference; and in secret and social prayer has shown much kindness, and given unexpected opportunities of acting for him at home and abroad, and enabled me to exert more power in this way than ever. The issue I leave to him. Upon the whole, he has kept my soul in a good measure alive to him; panting after the accomplishment of the promises, and daily looking for his coming; to do in me, and by me, as he has promised. He increases my desire and power to use my substance in the support of his servants and cause; makes me sensible of my danger as to several evils I might fall into; which causes me to cry to him against them. Secret prayer is more and more profitable and comfortable, and a solemn sense of eternity still rests upon my mind; with a strong desire to improve time, for myself and others. At times the Lord gives me to feel my weakness, and how quickly I should be swallowed up by my enemies, if he did not interpose. This night the Lord disappointed my fears; when I looked to him, he was at hand to help me.

December 8. Since my last date I have had keen inward sufferings; what are termed the buffetings of satan. Horror, at times, has taken hold of me. I felt much, but feared more. I

feared that I had grieved the Spirit of God, and therefore cried mightily to him, that if this was from an enemy he would rebuke the adversary, and give freedom from these painful feelings; but if from himself, they might continue till every end was answered that was intended by sovereign love. On Sunday last I longed to go to church, expecting relief; and in the afternoon his servant was a son of consolation. My soul was strengthened and comforted by what I heard. But in the evening, at the chapel, my distress returned. I felt stripped of all: I wished to be searched to the bottom, and appealed to the Lord that I longed to be all he would have me. Jesus drew sweetly nigh, and comforted me. For some minutes I attempted to examine myself, but all was in confusion: one thing seemed pressed upon my mind, but whether from an enemy I could not say. I gave it up to the Lord, and prayed that he would lead me into his will. On Sunday night and Monday, my mind was burthened: I looked and longed for relief in the means afforded me, but was disappointed. On Tuesday afternoon, Jesus again drew nigh and comforted me; but this did not continue, and again fear returned. Time seemed to fly fast, and still little was done. I felt a poor trifler with God. On Wednesday I was distressed, fearing many things: comfort sprung up in my soul at times, but it did not abide. In the course of some years I have had several attacks of this kind; sometimes much worse indeed. O that my fears may be

disappointed, and that the Lord would give me the thing that I long for; the accomplishment of all the promises he has given for extensive usefulness, and prosperity of soul. I am much discouraged for want of this; and also, that the attempts I make to do good seem to prove abortive. When, O my God, when shall I have it to say, that thou hast fulfilled the desires of my soul, and given me the thing that I looked for?"

Such repeated exercises and deliverances tended greatly to qualify Lady Maxwell to give advice, and to administer consolation to others when tempted or distressed. Thus she again addressed her afflicted, desponding friend:—

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, December 14, 1784.

"I had not time to answer my dear daughter's note yesterday, but wish to-day to ask how she does, hearing that many of the family have been complaining. In the New Jerusalem, *none* shall say they are sick: but while here, according to the laws of mortality, we must expect to be often pained and distressed both in body and mind. But O what comfort does it afford us to know, that "We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmi-

ties :" on the contrary, in *all* our afflictions he is afflicted. An earthly friend may, and does feel for us, yet often cannot relieve us; Jesus, on the contrary, not only sympathizes with us, but supports, upholds, and comforts us; and the very moment that deliverance is proper, he gives it. What a strong argument this for entire resignation to every dispensation of providence and grace. O may our hearts at all times sweetly acquiesce in all the holy will of God respecting ourselves, and those with whom we stand closely connected! His smile creates our day:

> " In darkest shades if Christ appear,
> Our dawning is begun."

I have felt a little of this of late: tried for some days with severe conflicts, the fiery darts of the enemy were keenly pointed. In these very trying seasons we feel what poor helpless creatures we are: how soon we should be utterly destroyed if left to grapple with our spiritual foes in our own strength. O how precious is a Saviour then! In tender mercy he drew near, rebuked the adversary, and smiled upon me. May he enable us, in every temptation, to look to him and overcome.

My soul strongly breathes after more of his mind and image, and for power to promote his cause and kingdom. I feel but as a babe in him, but do long, night and day, for the strength of a father. O to possess every purchased blessing!

I long also to hear of the prosperity of your soul. You have long walked through a wilder-

ness of trials and temptations. O that he now would bring you into a wealthy place! "Pray without ceasing," and do not faint, though an answer is not speedily given. The Lord will come in his own time, and rebuke the adversary for your sake, and your path shall be as "the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." I hope you will receive good accounts of your brother. Cast all your care upon God; and believe me ever,

Your affectionate parent in the Lord, D.M."

She thus concludes the year:—

—— 31. I have been much drawn to secret prayer to-day, and spent more time in it than usual; avoiding every unnecessary avocation, and even some that were otherwise, in order to give myself wholly to prayer and spiritual exercises. I have found sweetness, and inward liberty; though the adversary was very busy, trying every method to intercept me. I do not prove all the power of prayer I wish, but I have certainly felt more of it these last eighteen months than in any former period. I wish to pray without ceasing. I see the necessity of praying always, and not fainting: but I find hope deferred fatigues the mind, and wearies the spirit. Yet I feel, through grace, determined to pray on, till I have it to say, not one word has failed of all that the Lord has spoken concerning me. Upon a retrospect of this year, now come to an end, I find I have

infinite cause to praise the Lord, much more so than I supposed, when, some days ago, I was consulting only my present feelings. It is melancholy to think how soon a sense of the Lord's goodness dies away from the soul, even after the strongest manifestations of his love. Lord, what is man that thou shouldest shew kindness to him! How ungrateful, insensible, unfaithful, and unprofitable. Yet still thou art good: but thou knowest whereof he is made, and rememberest he is but dust. O, how do I long to feel sovereign grace triumphing over all my weakness, ignorance, unbelief, fear, yea, every thing, that is contrary to the will of my God. Since January, 1783, the Father of Mercies has several times appeared in my behalf in a remarkable manner; in public, private, and secret: indeed, times without number, but more especially on three different occasions; twice at his own table, and once in secret. What consolation did he pour into my soul! With what communion with himself did he favour me, immediately before I was visited with a severe trial! Words cannot, may silence speak his praise. Some months after that, how wonderfully did he condescend to explain the dispensations of his providence and grace toward me, when they were so mysterious I could not understand them, and had well nigh sunk in the mire of despondency: but he took me out of that horrible pit, set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Then was I made to ride

upon my high places for months, till again, through the power of temptation, the remains of unbelief, and the subtle workings of the adversary of souls, I was driven to extremity. Again Jehovah, who "sits above the water-floods, and remaineth King for ever," spoke to my soul with Divine power, and the mountains melted down. He condescended to tell me what he was doing, and what he would do, and how much I was mistaking his dealings with me. Amazing goodness! O to be humble, and thankful! Here again my head was lifted up above my foes, and I was made to triumph over those who threatened to lead me captive. When stretched upon a bed of sickness, O how did my God disappoint my fears, and exceed my expectations! My mind, which on these distressing occasions, used to be painfully languid, and often the seat of inexpressible fears, was refreshed with a sense of the Divine presence, and raised above the present affliction; and my lips, which used to be closed in these trying seasons, were opened to speak the praises of him who dealt so kindly with me. But time would fail to tell of all the instances of the goodness of my God, during the last twelve months; and not to me only, but to others also, with whom I stand nearly connected: to some, by the ties of nature; to others, by those of grace. Suffice it to say, that he hath done all things well; and that eternity alone can bring to light, or make sufficiently known, all his goodness to

me. With my soul, and all that is within me, I desire to bless and magnify his holy name;

> "To praise him for all that is past,
> And trust him for all that's to come."

Amen.

1785.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

January 12. Very frequently I have taken up my pen to give expression to my complainings; but now, I would indite thanks and praises to my God for his goodness. I entreated him to usher in the year with his blessing, and he has granted my request. He is a God of mercy: blessed are all those who put their trust in him. He gives me to know more and more that he is the hearer of prayer. On Sabbath last, I had an opportunity to renew my covenant engagement to the Lord, by sitting down at his table. While uniting in prayer with the great congregation, the Lord Jesus drew nigh, brought with him unutterable peace, and shed a heavenly serenity throughout my soul: this increased upon sitting down at the sacred table, and continued the

whole day. I enjoyed a delightfully spiritual frame wherever I went, and in whatever I was engaged. The Lord filled my hands all day with his work, and my heart with his love. Some hours were spent with the sick, in prayer and conversation, and in ministering to their wants in various ways; and the Lord countenanced those labours of love. My heart, at times, felt almost too full for utterance.

—— 20. Unwell in body, but comfortable in soul. The Lord has increased what he so graciously bestowed on Sunday week. I have had a fuller enjoyment and clearer view of my God and Saviour. It has been almost as one unclouded day, and the cry of my heart is, "Ever, Lord, abide thus with me." I found my mouth opened to tell, before those who fear his name, what he has done for my soul. To-day I have enjoyed many privileges, and endeavoured to let others partake of my enjoyments, by having the gospel preached to them. Many flock to hear: may they understand. The comfort I now enjoy makes me dread severe trials; yet I would not anticipate evil. One, in particular, I have cause to fear; but I leave all to my God, who doth all things well.

—— 28. Still my fellowship is with the Father and the Son. In writing to a Christian friend to-day, on the goodness of God, and on the sweetness of the love of Jesus, my heart seemed too full for utterance. This I also experienced immediately after, when conversing with a Chris-

tian. I could not but wonder at this barrenness of expression, when Divine love so prevailed in my heart. It convinced me, that both the power and the propriety of speech are from God, and are given, or withheld, as he sees meet. I long for the eloquence of Cicero, for the persuasive powers of Demosthenes, when speaking of the things of God; yet *these*, without his blessing, would not produce the great and desirable effects at which I aim: his glory, in the conversion of sinners. I must endeavour to be contented with meaner talents, and rest satisfied that even these may and *will* effect great things, if *Divine assistance* be afforded.

February 13. *Sunday*. My God has been unspeakably gracious all this day. I was strong, trusting in the Lord. My faith in Jesus seemed as a strong cable, fixed to an immoveable rock. I walked in the light of a luminous faith, and by his strength and light was carried through difficulties with ease and comfort. I was also privileged with an opportunity of shewing forth the death of Jesus; and truly he was with me, in his house, and by the way. In the afternoon, found the company of those that were not alive to God exceedingly *irksome*. What a blessing it is, always to associate with *living souls*.

March 12. Three weeks have elapsed since my last date; various hinderances have been thrown in the way; but I believe nothing, but absolute necessity, should prevent my taking notice of God's dealings with me, by committing

them to paper; as I find a lively sense of his goodness is too apt to die away from my remembrance. I have not lost what the Lord bestowed on the 9th of January, and the Sunday following; but I do not at present enjoy so much *sensible comfort.* I seem to have more *faith* than *love,* and would gladly hope that the alteration is rather in *enjoyment,* than in *possession.* Last Sunday evening, in the chapel, the Lord renewed his goodness to my soul, but it has not proved permanent. I feel this change a great disappointment, as I had hoped the time was come, when I should be able to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks." I have not relinquished all hopes of its terminating in this mature and permanent experience. I fear lest my unfaithfulness should be the cause of any change for the worse. His grace can triumph over all my weaknesses, ignorance, and unbelief. I am also grieved that no effectual door is yet opened for my more extensive usefulness, according to his promise. Still I will hope against hope, because he is faithful, and his promises are "yea and amen."

April 1. Again ten days more are expired. How rapidly does time fly;—imperceptibly it steals away. How ardently do I desire that my improvement may be in proportion to the constancy and rapidity of its flight. I have still much cause to adore and bless my God, as the hearer of prayer. O that every fresh proof of his goodness may strengthen my trust for future

mercies; and more firmly confirm me in the belief, that not one word which he hath spoken concerning me shall fail of its accomplishment. From my deficiency herein, springs much distress; my harp is often hung upon the willows, and then my heart experiences much bitterness. Holy Father, whatever it is that causes these depressions, remove it far hence; and let me every moment dwell in love, and in God, that God may dwell in me. Lately, at times, I am hurt by entering too keenly into the subject on which I am conversing; especially when it happens to be a painful one: this produces too many words, many unnecessary ones; and, for a little, interrupts that calmness of mind, serenity of soul, and consciousness of the presence of God, I wish every moment to retain; and which always sweetly solemnizes the spirit.

May 4. I am in general kept waiting, as those that watch for the morning, for the appearing of my God, in that full display of his goodness, which he has promised. As yet, my hopes are disappointed; but I am thankful I have not been permitted to cast away my confidence. I still believe, that "he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." I have lately been favoured with many evident answers to prayer; my extremity has been the opportunity for Divine mercy to interpose, and often very remarkably to disappoint my fears. In secret prayer, the Lord frequently renews his loving-kindness to my soul; but I long to prove these mani-

festations of Divine love more transforming. With the Psalmist, I may say, "My soul breaketh for the longing it hath" for full conformity to the Divine image, and for power to fill up all my time for, and with God.

—— 27. A time of close trial from various causes. I have been made to feel, not only the emptiness, but the bitterness of persons, places, and things. I have been, and still am, in heaviness through manifold temptations. In the midst of all, I am much drawn to secret prayer, yet without any particular returns. All nature seems an aching void. O what would the world be to me, with all that is admired in it, without the sensible enjoyment of my God? A Bochim indeed! But, Lord, do thou shine gloriously from between the cherubim, into my soul;—then all creation smiles, and every object wears a delightful aspect. For some time past, my opportunities for doing good have been abundantly increased; and with eagerness of desire I have embraced them, and felt in my element when so employed.

June 22. Since my last date, the tide of temptation has run as high as ever I experienced it since I knew the Lord. It was, indeed, *high water;* but it did not continue very long; neither had I any remarkable deliverance,—the flood abated by degrees. O for a full rest from the days of adversity; such, at least, as this state admits, and which the word of God authorises me to expect. Daily, I am alternately tossed

between hope and fear, expectation and disappointment. I wade through the mire of perplexity and uncertainty, but still my trust is in the Lord. O my God, make me strong in faith.

July 26. It has now been for weeks a time of almost constant inward suffering, arising chiefly from keen unsatisfied desires after God. I cannot easily express what has been endured. Yet many opportunities to act for God have been afforded; most of which have been cheerfully embraced. Strong desire after secret prayer has also been allowed me; yet not followed with any remarkable answers. I have struggled hard at a throne of grace, to trust in the Lord, in spite of every temptation, and have often found it good to do so. For some days past, my heart has felt ready to break with anguish of spirit, from perceiving a want of conformity to God, and from a desire to glorify him. Lately, my desires for this have been so intense, that I have been sometimes tempted to think they came from an enemy; because they robbed me of present enjoyment, and sometimes *degenerated* into *impatience*. Within these few days, the Lord has condescended to shew me wherein I err, and thereby suffer loss. He gives me to see that these desires come from himself; but that they must be kept so far within proper limits, as not to prevent my sense of, and gratitude for, what he has already done for me; and that one way to express this gratitude is, by a proper enjoyment of what he has imparted, and a calm waiting upon him by faith for what he has

promised, and will in his own time perform. In repeatedly attempting this, I have found an instantaneous change in my soul for the better.

August 18. For some days after my last date, I enjoyed such a degree of freedom from painful temptations, as made me fear a state of insensibility. I prayed to the Lord, and he increased my comfort. Some weeks ago, I met with a trial, the *last* and *least* expected. At first, I felt as if thunderstruck; but soon recovered from this, and then sunk into a degree of supineness which alarmed me. I had, from the first, given it up to the Lord; entreating that his will might be done in this affair, and that the issue might terminate to his glory and my good. He afforded me no particular light, but kept me looking to, and depending on himself for direction; and has given me for some time an increase of love. Jesus has been near, and precious; and the enemy is in some measure chained up. I have thought, perhaps, this unexpected event may be one step towards the accomplishment of the promises, though I do not see how it can: but I remember the Lord has said, "He will bring the blind by a way they know not." My soul, therefore, waits upon the Lord, disposed to stand still, and see his salvation. O that he may make a plain path for my feet, with respect to this trial. I dread mistaking his will. He hath promised to be my counsellor. Lord, be it to thy handmaid as thou hast spoken.

——31. Through mercy, I have enjoyed

tranquillity of mind in general for some time. I have felt not only alive to eternal things, but comfortably so; with some power to lie passive in the hands of the Lord, and to pour out my soul with frequency and fervour at a throne of grace, which is my resource in all situations. A dawn of light, pointing out the path of duty, respecting the trial formerly mentioned, begins to arise; and brings comfort and gratitude along with it. I cannot easily express the sweet and ardent desire that fills my soul, for power and opportunity to glorify God by active service. I envy those who are thus highly favoured, and watch as those who wait for the morning light, for the time when I also shall be permitted to throw in my mite, for the support of that *best* of all *causes*, RELIGION. Lord, hasten the happy time.

September 4. The Lord enabled me to be earnest in prayer, for support and comfort under trials—to be brought out of them in his own good time—and to avert those which I dreaded; and *now*, he enables me to witness for him, that he is the hearer of prayer. He has in mercy literally answered my petitions. He has removed entirely the heavy trial mentioned above, which so perplexed me; and has also filled me with gratitude for his goodness, in disappointing my fears. The Lord was peculiarly gracious to me last Sabbath. He, in an uncommon manner, strengthened my body, and refreshed my soul. While at the table, the Lord Jesus, the master

of the feast, drew so very nigh, that faith seemed swallowed up in enjoyment. I was lost in wonder, love, and praise; and was permitted, like John, to lean my weary head on the bosom of the Saviour. He gave me sweet liberty to make all my wants known to him; my hopes, my fears, my desires. It was a time to be remembered. O that I may never forget it, but be enabled to improve to the utmost, this gracious visitation. Jesus has abode with me ever since. He carried me through difficulties the same day; and next morning I needed his presence much, being visited with severe bodily pain; my Beloved was near, and this sweetens every dispensation. O my God, now carry on the work rapidly, and fulfil the desires of my heart.

——21. Through the abounding mercy of my God, I am still enabled to hold fast what was bestowed on the 4th instant, though it has been, at times, as if through fire and water. Jesus is still near, and clear to the eye of my faith. O that he may never more depart. My soul is, more than usual, athirst for salvation. For many months, my strongest desires, and greatest expectations, were for a larger circle of action; these last still continue, but now with the addition of the former. I sweetly pant to prove the utmost extent of Christ's kingly power in my heart. I have much cause to praise him for many blessings, both temporal and spiritual. I see his gracious hand at work for me in many things, which calls forth my gratitude, and in-

creases my trust in him; but till he has delivered me from all my foes, there will be partial departures from him, and a deficiency in every grace; nor shall I be able to make him suitable returns.

October 5. I have much cause to say, truly God is good to the soul that seeks him. He still enables me to hold fast what he bestowed the 4th of last month; and has lately increased it. Last Sunday evening, in the chapel, God was peculiarly present; sweetly solemnized my mind, and increased my communion with himself: and on Monday, though necessarily employed in worldly matters, he kept me in the comfortable enjoyment of what he had bestowed. In the evening, when engaged in secret prayer, God was very gracious; my feelings were uncommon: it seemed as if the Lord was about to work a greater work in my soul than ever; but in that moment, the adversary so furiously assaulted me, that I seemed driven back from the very port of bliss. To-day, I enjoy calm peace and inward liberty. Prayer is my resource on all occasions; and truly, I experience it an unspeakable privilege. My God permits me to bring all my affairs, both great and small, to himself; and condescends to hear and answer my petitions. I hope I am learning more gospel simplicity, and am taught to look for all I want by faith. For many months, my whole soul has been thirsting after a *larger sphere* of action; agreeably to the promises of a faithful God. For these few last weeks, I have been led to plead

earnestly for more holiness. Lord, give both, that I may praise thee. This evening again, in secret prayer, my gracious Saviour gave me so much of his delightful presence, as seemed to supersede the medium of faith; *it* felt as if lost in fruition; I was ready with Peter to say, "It is good to be here." The store-house of Divine mercy appeared open to me, yet I had not power to lay hold on all I wanted and desired. It seemed rather a time of *enjoyment*, than of *wrestling*. Lord, teach me how to improve to the utmost these seasons of love.

—— 8. This has been a precious day; unutterable sweetness has been diffused through my soul. I have been permitted to behold the face of my gracious Saviour, and to enjoy communion with my God and Father. Yesterday, my perception of Divine objects was not so clear; this was painful, as I feared it prognosticated the removal of my comfort, and an overshadowing of my delightful prospect; but to-day my God, who is rich in mercy, scattered the rising clouds. The Sun of Righteousness, by the brightness of his shining, dispelled the dreaded gloom, and dissipated whatever threatened to intervene and obscure my heavenly light. I have been enabled to plead for holiness, for every blessing Christ has purchased, and for the witness and the fruit of the Spirit. Come, O my God, in all thy fulness come!"

We must here pause for a moment, again to introduce to the reader, the amiable and afflicted

Lady Hope. In the autumn of this year, she removed to Bristol Hot Wells: her health was now rapidly declining, and it became painfully evident to her affectionate friends, that the time of her departure was at hand. By this affliction, all the tender sympathies of Lady M—'s heart were excited; and with a solicitude truly maternal, she endeavoured, by consolatory epistles and fervent prayers, so to fortify the mind of her "Dear Daughter," that she might be enabled with Christian confidence to enter the "valley of the shadow of death." The following letters, which it is believed were the last she ever wrote to the dying saint, will be read with interest.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, October 26, 1785.

"Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied" to my dear daughter, more abundantly, in her present distressing situation. I heard with surprise, from Lady G—, of your being much worse by the journey to Bristol. I fear the pain of parting with a dear friend has made things worse than they would otherwise have been. I would have written sooner, to express my maternal sympathy with, and anxiety about you, but that I feared, from the account I had, it might be improper. This, however, did not prevent, but double my attention, to the use of those means whereby I thought I could most essentially serve you; but

as Lady G—, who was with me yesterday, read me part of a letter written with your own hand, I thought I would venture a few lines.

It affords me comfort to think, that you have such a good woman about you as Mrs. S—; and I felt my heart cleave to your amiable brother, Mr. John, for his kind attention to you. Lady G—, for my satisfaction, was so good as to read a part of his letter to her, wherein he speaks of finding you better than he expected; though I fear the best account that can be given, of the present state of your health, is not what your friends would wish. But, my dearest daughter, I rejoice that you are in the hands of *Him* who loves you infinitely better than I, or any earthly friend, can do; who will make all your bed in your sickness, and smooth the pillow of disease; and who, I trust, will sweeten this bitter cup with a comfortable sense of his love. O that he may, in the absence of relations and Christian friends, make up your every want; disperse every cloud; scatter all your fears; wipe away every tear; enable you to lean your weary head, by faith, upon his bosom; and give you liberty to pour all your complaints there. O that you may, more than ever, taste salvation in the name of Jesus: that dear name, which

"Charms our fears, and bids our sorrows cease."

May you prove the sovereign efficacy of his precious blood, in cleansing you from all sin, and in filling you with Divine peace and heavenly tranquillity of mind. May he chain up the adversary

of your soul, and give you peace in all your borders; and, with unbroken resignation, enable you to acquiesce in all his blessed will concerning you. All these great things your dear Lord can easily work in your soul: if he but speak the word, the work shall be done; nay, one look from him can effect it. O what a comfortable view of things is this, when we feel ourselves poor and weak as helpless infancy, and can do nothing. The Lord give you to experience it fully.

How willingly would I endeavour to render you every kind attention, could a wish convey me to your bed-side. Indeed, Lady G— has been so kind, as to beg I would go up with her, supposing, also, my health might be bettered by it; but I fear it would not answer. The season is now far advanced, and set in very cold; and I do not see how I could return alone, and I could not tarry all winter. You may believe what comfort it would give me, to see you once more in the land of the living.

Lady G— is wonderfully well; and how kind has the Lord been to her, in delivering her so quickly from that load of difficult business that B— has caused her so long, and at such a *critical time*. Truly, our God is good to the soul that trusts in him. She proposes to leave this soon; it is a comfort to me that she is to be with you. I received 10*l.* from her, for the school and poor; your attention is great. But I am afraid I am making this too long, forgetting your weakness.

To the ever watchful care of the Shepherd of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, I commit my dearest daughter, and remain her truly affectionate parent in the Lord, D. M.

LETTER XL.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, November 7, 1785.

I sent my dear Lady H— a few lines by post some days ago, and hope the fatigue of reading them has not hurt her. Trusting that this is the case, I take the opportunity of our dear friend's going to you, to write again. I am happy to think she goes so soon; if it is the Lord's will, I hope you will have a comfortable winter together, so far as weakness and many complaints of body on both sides will permit.

I hope the Lord keeps you, as in the hollow of his hand, and covers your defenceless head from the fierce attacks of the enemy, in your weak state. He in mercy often stays his rough wind, in the day of his east wind, knowing what poor, weak, helpless creatures we are, and how little we can bear. He is a God who delighteth in mercy, and has no pleasure in the distress of his people. When he afflicts them at any time, it is to answer some great purpose; and while he chastises with the one hand, he supports with

the other; and in general, on these occasions, his consolations are neither few nor small. I trust my dear daughter finds the best wine has been kept to the last. O that the heavenly attraction may be strong, so as to raise her superior to painful feelings, and to deliver her from that anxiety which brings weakness upon the soul. Believing views of Jesus, and of the infinite merit of his sufferings, are a ground of much solid comfort to the distressed Christian. With what holy boldness may these be pleaded at a throne of grace, and with much acceptance, even when the soul, to its own apprehension, is all darkness, confusion, and fear; pressed down with manifold temptations. This is a foundation that cannot be sapped, that standeth ever strong, immoveably fixed in God. On this Rock of Ages my dear daughter is built; therefore, praises at all times, and in every situation, should her glad tongue employ. *Behold your God,* and be strong. He lays the foundation of your hope and trust, in *oaths,* in *promises,* in *blood.* Surely, then, you should stand firm as the beaten anvil to the stroke. What should discourage you? Or why, with vexing thoughts at any time, should your soul be disquieted? With a holy fortitude, *you* may look forward to death, judgement, and eternity. Though weak and poor in yourself, yet in virtue of your union with the Lord Jesus, you may grasp Omnipotence, and call it your own. "Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Jesus, your surety, hath answered all

the demands that law and justice had against you: fly, then, to your strong hold in the day of trouble, and you may defy all the powers of earth and hell.

The sacrament was given in Edinburgh last Sunday, in our church. Mr. Randal preached a most delightful sermon upon the love of Jesus to his church, "Who loved his *church*, and gave *himself* for it." I was very poorly in body, but tasted his love in my soul. On Monday, I was not so well as to be able to go abroad; but my Jesus, on the last day of the feast, gave me my portion at home. How tenderly does he deal with his people!

Miss N—— is just come from B——, and tells me Lady C. E. is a good deal better; her pulse come down to 76, and her pain much abated; and suffers with a sweet spirit. May Jesus make himself fully known to her, and comfort her in the time of trouble. Mrs. H— and family are pretty well. But Lady G— will give you all particulars; therefore, I need not take up your time and strength. Many thanks for your kind attention in sending Mrs. Fletcher's Letters, &c. &c. She has indeed suffered a great loss in the death of such a husband; but he has been highly favoured in his last conflict. Happy those who are safely landed. Lady G— insisted upon paying for the small books, though I told her you had desired I should. So that I have £1 5s. of your money; say to what use it should be put.

I fear the length of this; do read but a little

of it at once. May goodness and mercy follow my dear daughter all her days; a large proportion of Divine love be mixed in every cup, so as to conquer every fear; and at last may she enter the harbour of peace and endless bliss, in the full triumph of faith. So prays her very affectionate friend in Jesus, D. M."

The affliction and death of friends appear to have excited the following seasonable and solemn reflections.

"November 17. O, time, swift of wing, how rapid is thy flight! Blessed be God, who has taught me to pierce beyond an hour. Yet what cause have I to mourn that I have not more fully improved that important talent. Where, Lord, lies the defect? I can appeal to thee, O thou searcher of hearts, that it is my constant desire to fill up every moment with something valuable. I fear I too much overlook the *present*, in expectation of something more favourable in *future*. The awful blanks of time are many. How many are numbered with the dead during last week! even among those I knew, either by character or personal acquaintance. But for the joyful prospect of a happy eternity, the *mutability* of all created good would spread around our world a black and impenetrable cloud. Blessed be God, though all here are shadows, all beyond the grave is ever-during substance."

One extract more shall close this year.

"December 31. I was much disposed this day to spend my time with God, to consider my ways, and meditate on the time that is past; met with interruptions, but being for the profit of others, I endeavoured to be satisfied. I asked a token for good, in the end of this year as in the former one, and my gracious God condescended to give it. How many are my mercies; this last year, they have been great. My communion with the Father and the Son has been uncommonly sweet and near; and since the 4th of September, almost uninterrupted. In temporal things, also, the hand of my God has been very visible. He has also given me much bodily health, and when deprived of the means of grace through indisposition, he kept my soul as a watered garden; and gave me, in prayer and meditation, delightful enjoyment of himself. Lately, also, my God has opened an unexpected door for usefulness. Surely, I bend under a load of mercies, spiritual and temporal: O for a more grateful heart. How shall I sufficiently praise my God and Saviour. Come, Lord, and assist me to praise thee in higher strains than ever. O come, and accomplish in me thy promises, and all my powers shall be greatly enlarged."

1786.

Death of the Ladies Hope and Glenorchy—Lady Maxwell appointed Executrix of the latter—visits England—meets with the Rev. Alexander Mather —character of—correspondence with him—and the Rev. C. Atmore.

This was an eventful and memorable year in the life of Lady Maxwell. That sacred bond of union, which nothing in life had been able to dissever, was at once broken up by the irresistible and unrelenting arm of death. On the first of January, Lady Henrietta Hope bid adieu to all the pains and disquietudes of mortality, and entered into life. She had long languished under an enfeebled body, and had been called to endure a complication of afflictions. While these, sanctified as they were by grace, naturally induced her to trim her lamp, and to wait, in an expectant attitude, the coming of her Lord; they also tended to prepare her friends for the painful bereavement. Lady Glenorchy was with her at Bath; a close and unwearied attendant. It was her honourable employment to watch over the last lingering moments of the dying saint, to

sooth the bed of death, and to witness the flight of her redeemed and triumphant spirit.

"But after every medical exertion had proved ineffectual, and the medicinal virtue of the wells yielding no relief, she meekly rendered up her ransomed soul into the hands of her Redeemer. Thus died Lady Henrietta Hope, more full of honour than of days, leaving behind her a fair copy of every thing praiseworthy and of good report. A considerable part of her property she left for pious and charitable purposes."*

Though Lady Maxwell could not but rejoice to hear that the object of her affectionate solicitude had conquered her last enemy, and entered into the joy of her Lord; the pang at parting appears to have been acute. This is inferred from her expressive silence. During this season of suffering, she did not venture to record her emotions. There is a chasm in her Diary of three weeks; a rare case; and when she resumed her pen, she did not even notice the painful occurrence. On some occasions, probably, she found that the only way to avoid excessive and inordinate sorrow, was; by laying a powerful restraint upon herself, to keep the cause of her distress, as much as possible, absent from her mind. It has been a matter of surprise to her most intimate friends, that she should so carefully shun all conversation relative to the prema-

* Gibbon's Memoirs of eminently pious Women. vol. II. p. 260.

ture loss of her husband and child; but she appears to have been influenced by the above reason. To her friend, Miss Ritchie, who had requested from her an account of the means by which the Lord brought her to himself, she replied, "You ask me to give you the particulars of my awakenings and conversion; and how, since, the work of sanctification has been carried on? To give you a minute detail of this, would carry me beyond the limits of a letter, and lead me to do violence to my *temper* and *feelings;* the former by nature *shy*, and in this respect not entirely conquered by grace; the latter *keen* and *tender;* easily wounded by recalling past scenes of woe, when indeed they were tried to the uttermost." To the request of her friend she could not, however, remain entirely silent; and therefore proceeded in her usual laconic way on this subject:—"Suffice it to say, I was chosen in the furnace of affliction. The Lord gave me *all* I desired in this world, then took *all* from me; but immediately afterwards, sweetly drew me to himself." That Lady Maxwell's feelings were exquisite on the present occasion, will be no cause of surprise. While religion moderates and refines the sensibilities of our nature, it, at the same time, imparts a susceptibility which can only be felt by those, who are the subjects of its influence. She was deprived of her nearest and dearest earthly friend; one for whom she had entertained the most cordial and unmixed esteem; for whose spiritual and

eternal welfare she had exerted her utmost energies; and one, who had ever been most ready to enter with her, into every measure calculated to meliorate the moral condition of man. They had for years walked to the house of God in company; one in sentiment, and one in heart:

> "——— Nor varied ought,
> In public sentence, or in private thought."

Now, they were separated for a season; the one to enjoy her full reward; while the other remained a few years longer, to witness the power of Divine grace; and to prosecute, with undeviating fidelity, that important work, which the great Head of the church had in reserve for her. On resuming her pen she wrote as follows.

"January 21. For these last three weeks, I have expected greater things than it has pleased my God to bestow. He is good; supremely good when he gives, nor less so when he withholds. But I dare not say that he has withheld altogether. He has, in mercy, favoured me with several *sweet*, though *short* visits, since the first of the month. I have, indeed, had some exquisitely painful moments, and felt ready to sink beneath the pressure; but by trusting in a faithful God, he soon raised me up, and has restored an intense thirst for all the mind that was in Christ. He has given me a desire equally ardent for power to bring forth much fruit, even an hundred fold; and in tender mercy has granted me to see, where I least expected any, some good

effects of my labour. He does, indeed, enable me to strengthen and comfort his own children: to him be all the glory. Lord, let a little one become as a thousand: nothing is too hard for thee. But what I now principally desire to see, is the conversion of sinners. O, my God! give me many clear, decided proofs of this; many witnesses for thee, brought out of darkness into thy marvellous light. O put energy into the words I speak, the letters I write, the prayers I offer, for, and with others! and do not suffer me to remain in the world comparatively useless: while, at the same time, my heart burns with desire to glorify thee in every possible way; and while I am encouraged to expect much from thy own faithful word of promise. Come, Lord, O come quickly, and do as thou hast said."

When her Ladyship wrote the above, she appears to have attained her former tranquillity: but scarcely were the wounds healed, and the tears wiped from the cheek, occasioned by the departure of Lady Hope, before Lady Maxwell was again called to the work of sacrifice.

> "When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
> But in battalions."

So, at least, it proved in the present instance. Lady Glenorchy, the next illustrious individual in this threefold union of private friendship, and of public worth, "full of plans for the glory of God, and good of men, and busy in the prosecution of them, returned from Bath to Edinburgh

in the beginning of this summer. Her friends observed, with concern, her declining state of health. She spoke much to them of death, and of her persuasion, that, to her, it was near; and uniformly expressed her satisfaction and joy at the prospect. Religion, in her, was not the production of gloom, either during the progress of life, or in the near views of its termination. Almost her last words were, "If this be dying, it is the easiest thing imaginable." Disease prevailed—and not many hours afterwards she expired, in the 44th year of her age, at the house of the Countess of Sutherland, on Monday, the 17th of July, 1786. Of her may be said in truth, what with equal propriety can not be said of every departed Christian, "Her path was as the shining light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day.'"*

On this melancholy occasion, Lady Maxwell ventured to record her feelings; and in doing this, could not avoid glancing at her former loss. On the 21st of this month, four days after the demise of her friend, she expressed herself in the following manner. "I have met with a severe, and most unexpected trial, in the death of a dear Christian friend. How mysterious are the ways of God? But we know the Judge of the whole earth must do right. Silence, therefore, becomes his creatures, under the darkest

* Gibbon's Mem. &c. Vol. II. p. 271.

and most painful dispensations. In mind and body, for the last few days, I have been distressed; and at times, overwhelmed with grief and astonishment:—

"Every sorrow cuts a string,
And urges us to rise."

Yet nothing but sin need hinder my heavenly progress. O that my God would now come, and absorb my will in his. May he give victory over every spiritual foe, that I may enjoy a peaceful habitation in my own soul; and derive every possible improvement from this bereavement. I have now, within these seven months, lost two invaluable Christian friends. O to get nearer to the *fountain*, now the *streams* are cut off. I believe, that two years ago, the Lord gave me warning of what has now occurred. The death of these two friends, is in some measure explanatory of my experience *at that time;* but I expect *far greater things*, than have as yet happened, to make it fully clear to me. At present, I would stand still, and see the Lord bringing about his own purposes, and fulfilling to me his own promises. I wish to be much in prayer; I greatly need it. The prayer of faith "shuts or opens heaven." Come, Lord, and fully turn my captivity."

The solemn and affecting events thus brought under review, are admirably calculated to teach many important and useful lessons: it would indeed be well, if the living would lay them to

heart. But, though there are few reflections more trite, or more readily admitted, than, that life is uncertain, and must shortly terminate;—that the most delicious sweets of earthly friendship are exceedingly evanescent;—that all human greatness

> "———— is like a circle in the water,
> Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself,
> Till, by broad spreading, it disperse to nought."

Yet, alas! how feeble the influence which these truths appear to have, on the actual doings of men in general. This is greatly to be lamented. It is thus for want of practically observing, what is generally known and acknowledged, that the world is ruined. The pious Christian, it is sincerely hoped, will not overlook or readily forget, one particular, which claims his attention;—the ardent and steady affection exercised by these excellent females towards each other. This affection, as we have seen, had to struggle with difficulties; yet it rose superior to them. Though these two ladies differed in sentiment on some important points in theology; though these sentiments, at times, led to some collision, in their endeavours to do good; yet, being fully convinced that they were both seeking to attain the same grand object, difference of sentiment could not resist the claims of mutual esteem; or diminish from the unfettered exercise of that love which thinketh no evil. On the contrary, these firm friends, with Lady Hope, as their endeared

companion, throughout the whole of their religious course, exemplified to the church, and to the world, the full force of religious principle; in cementing the genuine members of Christ's mystical body in an indissoluble union; and, held up an example, of pure and disinterested affection, worthy the imitation of the whole religious world.

Lady Maxwell never yielded to the reveries of ungoverned fancy, nor was she the creature of wild and undefined impressions: on the contrary, she ever diligently sought to know the will of God, by the ligitimate use of every means of grace afforded her; and in cases of perplexity and uncertainty, she stood still, and gave herself to prayer. But in the course of the last two years especially, she had experienced such an intensity of desire for the prosperity of Sion; and had received, in answer to prayer, so many powerful and peculiar applications of Scripture promises, in reference to this subject; as led her firmly to believe, that God was about to enlarge her borders; and to employ her in a more extended field of usefulness. She knew not the way, in which this should be effected; frequently observed, that "the aspect of Providence seemed to contradict the promises;" yet she could not be tempted to relinquish her hold of these promises; and now it was about to be done to her, according to her faith. The cold calculators, on what is called a rational religion, which goes to exclude all immediate operations of the Spirit,

from the heart, may find some difficulty in accounting for it, but it is a fact which cannot be contradicted: Lady Maxwell had long a persuasion, which in her mind, had all the influence of an absolute certainty, that God had some great work for her to perform, though no intimations of Providence appeared to authorise such a persuasion. By the *Will* of Lady Glenorchy this prophetic impression received its full accomplishment; and what even to Lady M— had appeared mysterious, was thus clearly explained. She was, as before intimated, constituted the sole executrix of her deceased friend; appointed the principal superintendant and manager of her numerous chapels, both in England and Scotland; and became thus invested with the disposal of important funds, for other religious and charitable purposes. What were the precise powers, with which her Ladyship was entrusted, is not known to the editor; but they appear to have been extensive, and almost unlimited. The following extract developes her views and feelings on this interesting occasion.

"July 28. Since the 25th, the Lord hath dealt wonderfully with me. By the death of the dear friend mentioned above, and by the over-ruling providence of Him, who is the great Disposer of all events, an increase of fortune has devolved upon me. This, through the grace and strength of the Most High, I firmly purpose to use for the promotion of his glory; by endeavouring to promote to the utmost, his cause and kingdom

in the world. This is agreeable to the desire of my deceased friend, and consonant to her practice, while it remained in her own possession: it also accords with the whole bent of my own soul, and with the will of that gracious God, who has, for these purposes, entrusted me with it. With these views, I have this day attempted to make a solemn dedication of myself to him; with all that he has now, and formerly given me, or may yet give me; earnestly imploring, that he would afford me light to discover his will, in all things necessary for me to know; and power and inclination constantly to comply with it:—also much, very much of the wisdom of the serpent, with a large proportion of the harmlessness of the dove, happily blended; so as to enable me to manage all my affairs with discretion, that in nothing the gospel may be blamed;—that I may besides be faithful to him, who hath appointed me; rising superior to the smiles, or frowns of mortals. Thus, O my God, I have again given myself to thee:—let me never live to draw the impious breath that would retract the deed; but may I, to the latest moment prove, the happy effects of this, and many former self-dedications. The greatest satisfaction I feel from this bountiful dispensation, is, its coming to me, so *evidently*, so *strongly* marked with the *Divine* signature. This was evident, not only by the powerful impression made on my mind by the Spirit of God, as if he had said "*this comes from me*," at the very moment the first intimation of it was given

by man; but, also, by its being so very explanatory of God's dealings with me, for the last two years. What has been very mysterious to me, is *now fully* explained. For some days, the Lord has been leading me to review my spiritual experience, for a number of years; in which I have been enabled to trace so clearly, the wisdom, the beauty, the propriety, and the goodness of his dispensations, both of providence and grace, as fills me with wonder and gratitude; and produces in me a deep and powerful conviction of his faithfulness. Language entirely fails me, when I would express my sense of obligation. O that I may ever retain this equally strong. And now, Lord, what can thy handmaid say more? O, may my future life speak thy praise. And, do thou come, and accomplish the promises given for the prosperity of my soul; then shall it be as a watered garden."

On the 5th of August, Lady M— wrote as follows:—"Many difficulties have occurred connected with the important business committed to me; but I feel encouraged to go on in the strength of the Lord; believing, that as the whole matter originated with himself, he will bring me through all, in a proper manner. Indeed, he *is* bringing me, step by step, through these difficulties; and I now see, and conclude, without a doubt, that this is the great blessing promised me in general, at his own table, in May, 1784. This is that active sphere, in his cause, which he promised me years ago; but, for which, he en-

abled me firmly to believe, at the time alluded to above. Since then, through what a variety of painful exercises of mind have I past; but my faithful God has at last brought matters to a crisis; yet, alas! it is by the loss of a dear Christian friend. I am kept crying to the Lord for wisdom, direction, and light: He affords me sweet encouragement to expect all I want; and he makes his word truly profitable to me. He also gives me reason to believe, that he is carrying on his work in my soul. I can almost believe, he has imparted the blessing so long sought, *perfect love*. The beginnings are but small, and I dare not positively conclude respecting my state; but will wait, and expect the Lord to shine upon his work. O how graciously has he dealt with me! How shall I sufficiently praise him for his faithfulness and goodness in every respect!"

In this spirit Lady Maxwell entered upon the work assigned her; and without loss of time, prepared for a journey to England. On the 5th of September, she left Edinburgh, and did not return until the 18th of October. She visited most of the places where Lady Glenorchy's chapels were situated; and made such arrangements, as she deemed best calculated, by the blessing of God, to secure religious prosperity. Her Diary does not enter into particulars; but several difficulties are alluded to, which beset her path: most of these, however, she was enabled to surmount; and on her return, devoutly thanked

God for direction and assistance. In one respect, at least, her journey proved highly advantageous to herself. At York, where her Ladyship tarried for some time, she met with the Rev. Alexander Mather. "Here," she writes, "I enjoyed many privileges; especially, in conversation and social prayer with that servant of Jesus Christ, the Rev. A. M." An intimate friendship commenced between them; and in her subsequent correspondence with this eminent minister of the gospel, she will be found to speak without reserve. Mr. Mather was, at this time, the superintendant of the Wesleyan Society in the above city. The following character given of him by his brethren in the ministry, will shew that Lady M— selected her acquaintance with judgement, and knew how to appreciate true excellence.

"This venerable man travelled in our connexion for forty-two years with great success. His usefulness in the church of God, for a great part of that time, both as a father to the preachers, and as a steady supporter of all the branches of Christian discipline, was exceedingly great. Very numerous were his spiritual children, whom he instrumentally brought to Jesus Christ and salvation; but his grand *forte* was, the edifying of believers, and building up the church of Christ: here he was always at home. He was, we may truly say, a blessing to all among whom he sojourned.

"His afflictions, during the decline of life,

were extremely painful; but his confidence and comforts corresponded with his deep and extensive acquaintance with the things of God. The Lord had been unusually propitious to him, in the natural endowments of both his body and mind. He rose every morning at four o'clock, and could labour till nine at night, without apparent fatigue, in duties which required the closest application. In conversation and debate, he entered at once into the spirit of the business or subject in hand, and could instantly meet an objection with an appropriate reply. He was a perfect master of all the minutiæ of the doctrines and discipline of Methodism. Hereby he was enabled, from a principle of duty and conscience, to afford Mr. Wesley very considerable assistance in the superintendance of the Societies. His wisdom and experience, his courage and perseverance, rendered him an invaluable friend to our connexion, during some late troubles under which it suffered. He was never intimidated through fear of calumny, from pursuing those plans which he conceived to tend towards the peace and union of our Societies. His noble soul was elevated above the momentary opinion of a party. He looked only at the interests and glory of the Redeemer's kingdom, and waited for his reward in a better world."*

* *Minutes of Conference, Vol. II. p.* 82. For further particulars relative to the life and labours of this excellent man, the reader may consult the Methodist Magazine, for the year 1780, p. 91, and for the year 1801, p. 112.

Lady Maxwell heard Mr. Mather the night previous to her leaving York, preach in his usual luminous manner, on the important subject of faith. She was so forcibly impressed with his observations, that, on the following day, she wrote to request him to favour her with an outline of the discourse. The way was thus opened for an epistolary intercourse, which was continued with mutual benefit, until the growing infirmities of age, on the part of Mr. Mather, rendered it impracticable. The following letters will conclude this year.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

Easingwould, Oct. 18, 1786.

REV. SIR,

The kind attentions you have paid to my best interests since I came to England, encourage me to hope, that you will not refuse the request I now make, if only your numerous engagements will admit of your compliance. I regret that I did not mention it this morning, before I left York; but necessary attention to pecuniary matters, and want of time, caused it to escape me. The favour I mean to ask of you is this; that you would employ your first leisure moments in throwing together a few thoughts on the words you spoke from last night. To save you the trouble of much writing, and that I may have the satisfaction of receiving your communication in the course of a

post, you may write as concisely as possible. And as you possess the pen of a ready scribe, I hope you will not find the task imposed, in the least burthensome. I found the subject suitable to my state, but from the causes above mentioned, was prevented reaping all the benefit I desired.

Accept of my best wishes for yourself, and those you stand most closely united to by natural ties. I pray, that the highest expectations of a fond parent, may be fully answered in your hopeful son. His natural and acquired abilities afford you pleasing prospects; and if, to these, is superadded, the *greatest ornament* of human nature, what can you want, to render your happiness as complete as it can be expected in this vale of tears; except still more of the Divine image upon your own soul, and yet further success in your endeavours to promote the cause and kingdom of your Master.

That you may be thus highly favoured, is the desire of, Rev. Sir, your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER XLII.

TO THE REV. ALEX. MATHER.

Edinburgh, December 15, 1786.

REV. SIR,

I have been much and necessarily occupied, with temporal concerns, since my return home: this has abridged my time for work in which my heart is more engaged; and I have thus been

prevented returning you many and sincere thanks for the sermon. I find it truly profitable, and derive benefit from it, on every repeated perusal. It inculcates a lesson, which it is difficult to learn, *living by faith*. All nature opposes this: yet I am convinced, that I can only proceed in the Divine life, in propotion as I exercise this heavenly principle. And such is the present state of my mind, that no sermons, no letters, no books, no conversation are of any use to me, nor do I reap any comfort from them, except they treat of the life of faith. I have not yet the evidence my soul requires, that I am possessed of *full salvation*. But the Lord is teaching me many important lessons necessarily connected with it. He so condescends to my weakness and ignorance, as I cannot express. He also makes his word in secret a constant source of comfort and encouragement to me. In my pursuit of perfect love, I have often lately felt, as if just at the port of bliss; my soul has been filled with a hope full of immortality, and I have thought the time to favour me was come. Yet, still, something has prevented me from taking possession of the good land: but I hope this will not long be the case; for the Lord has so moulded my spirit, that nothing can satisfy me, but constant communion with, and full conformity to my God. The whole world, without this, appears to me an aching void, a wilderness of shadows. I suffer keenly from the remains of unbelief. Do assist me to hew this Agag in pieces, before the Lord.

It is a great mountain; yet had I faith, it would become a plain before the great Zerubbabel. That I should remain so slow of heart to believe, after all the Lord has done for me, and all the kindness he is daily shewing me, is truly amazing. I really feel ashamed; and yet I cannot help it. You say I may, but I cannot easily believe this. May the Lord shew me where lies the hinderance, and speedily remove it.

I should wish for an hour's conversation every day with you and Mrs. Mather; but as that cannot be allowed me, permit me to ask an interest in your prayers: for I can engage in nothing with satisfaction, till this great matter is settled. Business is a burthen to me; yet I must attend to it, as so much is committed to me. I know the Lord has peculiarly called me to it, and will therefore fit me for it; this is to me a constant source of comfort. Without this conviction, I should sink under the load, conscious of being unequal to the task.

Accept of my good wishes for the prosperity of your own soul, and for success in the work to which the Lord has called you. I hope Mrs. Mather sees much of the fruit of her labours. Remember me kindly to her, and believe me, Rev. Sir, your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

P. S. I have this day paid into the hands of Mr. Pawson, 3*l*. 3*s*. for the purpose mentioned to you when in England. It is the widow's mite, I pray it may be blessed.

LETTER XLIII.

TO THE REV. CHARLES ATMORE.*

Coates, December 30, 1786.

Upon recollection I do not find, Rev. Sir, that I have any thing material to add to the particulars mentioned to you on Thursday, concerning Mrs. Thompson :† but as you expressed a desire to have my thoughts on that subject in writing, I have thrown together a few hasty ones, being much circumscribed in point of time.

I never was in any particular habits of friendship with Mrs. T—; but for some years past being connected with her in church fellowship, I had, of course, frequent opportunities of conversing with her. From the knowledge thus obtained, I was led to regard her as a person possessed of sterling worth, rather than shining talents: as one originally cast in a very amiable mould;

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* The Rev. C. Atmore was, at the period of this date, one of the Wesleyan Ministers, stationed in Edinburgh. Having obtained help of God, he continues to this day; enjoying the esteem of his brethren, and the affection of thousands, and is at present the Superintendant of the London East Circuit.—1821.

† Mrs. Thompson was a pious, steady member of the Society, in Edinburgh, for many years. It will be gratifying to her surviving friends to see this short sketch of her character by the pen of Lady Maxwell.

of gentle manners; sweet pacific disposition; full of benevolence, and good will to all; rich in good works; and of great moral rectitude. I am inclined to think, that her ideas of religion in the earlier part of life were rather crude and indigested, but that in more advanced years she obtained a clearer view, and more experimental knowledge of some of the leading doctrines of Christianity; such as the fall of man and his recovery by Christ.

When convinced of her original depravity, and the absolute necessity of a Saviour to restore to the Divine favour and image, she set out in good earnest in the ways of God; nor ever slackened her pace till called home to receive her great reward. Being remarkably constant in her attendance on all the means of grace, she quickly found that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich." She soon obtained "the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins;" and I believe never after lost that antepast of heaven.

Thus happy in her own soul, her heart deeply dyed with generous kindness, expanded in large and fervent desires, that multitudes might share in the superlative felicity which she enjoyed. This led her, as Christian prudence directed, to be instant in season and out of season, to promote, in every possible way, the spiritual interests of her fellow-creatures.

Towards the close of life, it seemed good to the great Disposer of all events, to visit her with various trials; more especially the death of two

hopeful sons. Here all her maternal feelings were called forth, and keenly exercised; but in the midst of severe distress, she maintained a deportment worthy the character which she sustained. She bore these bereaving afflictions, not with the stoical apathy of the philosopher; but with the tender sensibility and noble firmness of the Christian, happily blended. She kissed the rod that smote her, and bowed in sweet submission to the Divine will.

Her mind seemed raised superior to the fears of death. She rather wished, and sometimes expressed a desire for dissolution; and God soon gave her the desire of her heart. The Almighty fiat went forth,—death came commissioned to put an end to all her sufferings. During the concluding scene she appeared full of peaceful resignation, but spoke little; the force of disease, in some measure, laying an embargo upon the powers of speech. Thus lived and died this excellent woman. She is now where the inhabitants say not they are sick. As Christians, it is our privilege to reap permanent advantage by every such providential dispensation.

"For *us* they sicken, and for *us* they die."

With good wishes for your spiritual prosperity, and great success in your ministerial labours,

I remain, Rev. Sir, your obliged, humble servant in the bonds of the gospel,

D. MAXWELL.

1787.

Difference of opinion entertained by Christians on the nature and extent of salvation—Lady Maxwell's sentiments on this subject—attains full salvation—her views with regard to the Trinity—She establishes Sabbath-day Schools—corresponds with Miss Ritchie, Mr. Mather, and Mr. Atmore.

The views entertained by Christians on the *nature* and *extent* of gospel salvation, must be of the utmost importance. If these are erroneous, their pursuit after it will be more or less retarded. And yet, it is to be lamented, that difference of sentiment has long obtained on this highly momentous subject. While all the sincere disciples of Jesus insist on the absolute necessity of holiness in order to *final* salvation, they are not agreed with respect to the *degrees* of holiness attainable on earth; or rather, as it respects the *time* when this holiness may be received. Some, from a deep conviction of the entire and radical depravity of human nature, and from a consciousness of the numerous imperfections which attach to us as men, have denied the possibility of our

being delivered from the remains of the carnal mind until the article of death; or at least conceive, that God does, for wise and gracious purposes, suffer his people to struggle with their innate ccorruptions, so long as they remain in the body:—that though sin is subdued, it is not eradicated; that though it does not reign, yet it maintains a warfare within, until mortality is swallowed up of life. Others, with views equally correct on the depth and malignity of human depravity, and equally conscious of unavoidable imperfections, conceive that they see enough in the scriptures, to authorise them to expect a *full* and a *present* salvation: not only from the guilt and dominion of outward sin, but also from the very remains of corruption in their hearts. They see an extent and efficacy ascribed to the atoning blood, sufficient to wash away all moral pollution: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:"—"the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." They are encouraged to expect the entire benefit of this renewing and cleansing process, by numerous exceeding great and precious promises: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—

"Having these promises," they cleanse themselves "from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."—While they pray, that God would "sanctify them wholly, body, soul, and spirit, and preserve them blameless to the coming of the Lord Jesus;" they believe it to be their imperious duty, and their exalted privilege, to love and serve God with all their heart, and soul, and mind; to "be perfect, as their Father, who is in heaven, is perfect." And having this hope in them, "they purify themselves, even as he is pure." "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." Thus they "increase with all the increase of God," until they attain to the "full stature of a perfect man in Christ."*

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* As there is still afloat much mistake and misrepresentation on this important branch of Christian doctrine and experience, the Editor deems it expedient to subjoin the following extract from Mr. Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection."

"Q. What is Christian Perfection?

"A. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies, that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love.

"Q. Do you affirm, that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?

"A. I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

"Q. But how can every thought, word, and work, be

That the latter sentiments were those entertained by Lady Maxwell, on this important

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governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake?

"A. I see no contradiction here. 'A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.' Indeed I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes, till this mortal put on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now *think* at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs, which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes *thinking wrong*, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

"But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty's mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet, where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly *a sin*. However, it cannot bear the rigour of God's justice, but needs the atoning blood.

"Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren, who met at Bristol, in August, 1758, on this head?

"A. It was expressed in these words: 1. Every one may mistake as long as he lives. 2. A mistake in *opinion* may occasion a *mistake* in practice. 3. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, 4. Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of the atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. 5. It follows, that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'

"This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable: namely, that those who are not

branch of Christian doctrine and experience, has been already abundantly manifest. While she

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offended, when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living *without sin*. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

"Q. But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain, that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?

"A. Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me: without (or separate from) me, ye can do nothing.'

"In every state we need Christ in the following respects: 1. Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from him. 2. We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid. 3. We have this grace not merely from Christ, but in him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap, derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch, which, united to the vine, bears fruit, but severed from it, is dried up and withered. 4. All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. 5. The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings, (as some not improperly speak,) their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and con-

believed every particle of good in man flows to him through the medium of atoning blood, she beheld an infinite worth in that atonement, to procure for her the highest possible degrees of grace; and a sufficient efficacy in the grace of God, *fully* to transform her into the Divine image. She durst not, therefore, limit the Almighty, or prescribe any boundaries to the operations of his grace on the human heart: but on the contrary, from the period she obtained justifying mercy, she invariably hungered and thirsted after full salvation;—to be delivered from all inward corruption, and to be filled with all the fulness of

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sequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul, 'He that loveth hath fulfilled the law, for love is the fulfilling of the law,' Rom. xiii. 10, 12. Now mistakes, and whatever infirmities naturally flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love, nor therefore in the Scripture sense, *sin*.

"To explain myself a little farther on this head. 1. Not only *sin, properly so called*, that is, voluntary transgression of a known law, but sin improperly, so called, that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown, needs the atoning blood. 2. I believe there is no such perfection in this life, as excludes these involuntary transgressions, which, I apprehend, to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. 3. Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should *seem* to contradict myself. 4. I believe a person filled with the love of God, is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. 5. Such transgressions you may call *sins*, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above mentioned."—*Wesley's Works*, vol. xi. p. 191—194.

God. She had often "felt as if just at the port of bliss;" and, to continue the figure, soon after the commencement of this year, she entered into this haven of rest. And, though she sunk deeper into self-abasement, became more completely sensible of her entire dependance on the Saviour, and continued to thirst after a growing conformity to God; yet, after waiting for the most satisfactory evidence, both from the *witness* and *fruit* of the Spirit, she was constrained to bear her steady, decided, and consistent testimony, that the bitter root of sin was destroyed.

Lady Maxwell's experience, from this time, to use her own expression, evidently "ran in a deeper channel." She had for years "walked with God," but now her walk became more intimate and familiar. She had long felt "the powers of the world to come;" after this, she frequently felt as if on the borders of immortality, holding converse with its heavenly inhabitants. Her faith became so vigorous, as, in a great measure, to draw aside the vail of sensible things; and enabled her to contemplate with a steady eye, invisible and eternal realties. While an indescribable emptiness appeared impressed on all terrestrial objects, the "whole affectionate powers of her soul" were concentrated, and *fixed* on Jehovah. To promote the glory of God; to extol the riches of his grace; to exalt the Saviour; to recommend redeeming love; to seek the salvation of souls; was, especially from this period, her only, and delightful employment. This was

the element in which she lived, and moved, and breathed. And though still conscious of her own nothingness and weakness; though still the subject of temptation, called to wrestle with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world; yet her spiritual enjoyments became more deep, solid, constant; her *frames* less subject to fluctuation. The pious and judicious will not, therefore, be either surprised or discouraged, if they find in her subsequent experience, an acquaintance and familiarity with the deep things of God, not common to the generality of Christians.

Her views respecting the sacred and sublime doctrine of the Trinity, deserve particularly to be examined with *modesty* and *caution*. "She considered that the revelation which God has made of himself to man, must needs be very partial; sufficient, however, for every practical and saving purpose; that no revealed truth is of a merely speculative nature, but that every one is designed to produce a practical influence on our mind and conduct, on our duties or privileges. The doctrine of three distinct, Divine subsistencies, in the *one* indivisible God, is a revealed truth, and on the authority of that revelation the Christian believes it: but in her view, and in her experience, this grand truth was not merely believed but *known*. The revelation of the doctrine is not for speculation; its direct influence on conduct is not easy to see; then it must wear an important aspect on the Christian's privileges."

Thus her Ladyship thought; and believed, that she received Divine manifestations from each Person in the ever-blessed Trinity; and enjoyed a *distinct* communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; frequently quoting, as confirmatory of her views and feelings, a passage which often afforded her peculiar consolation. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."*

At first, these glorious manifestations of Deity excited her surprise, and were even accompanied with a sacred awe, amounting almost to dread. She knew not how to account for them, and feared lest her apprehensions and feelings might lead her astray. She therefore long pondered these things in her heart, and remained silent; but becoming more satisfied of the reality of her experience, she ventured to open her mind to a few of her pious and spiritual advisers. What were the sentiments of Mr. Mather on this interesting subject, is not known; but in July of this year, Mr. Wesley wrote to her Ladyship, as follows:—

"After Mrs. Roe, first, and then Miss Ritchie, had given me so particular an account of that branch of their experience, I examined, one by

* John iv. 21, 23.

one, the members of the select Society in London on that head. But I found very few, not above nine or ten, who had any conception of it. I think there are three or four in Dublin, who likewise speak clearly and scripturally, of having had such a manifestation of the several Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity. Formerly I thought this was the experience of all those that were perfected in love. But I am now clearly convinced that it is not. Only a few of these are favoured with it. It was indeed a wonderful instance of Divine mercy, that, at a time when you were so encumbered with the affairs of this world, you should have so much larger a taste of the powers of the world to come." In a subsequent letter, he says:—"Mr. Charles Perronet was the first person I was acquainted with, who was favoured with the same experience as the Marquis de Renty, with regard to the ever-blessed Trinity.* I have, as yet, found but very

* The Marquis de Renty descended from one of the most noble houses of Artois. He was the only son of Charles de Renty, and was born in the year 1611, at Beny, in Lower Normandy. In early life, the reading of "Kempis on the Imitation of Christ," made a powerful impression on his mind; and, by the blessing of God, induced him to seek the one thing needful, the salvation of his soul. At the age of twenty-two, he married Elizabeth de Balsac, daughter of the Count of Graville. When he had reached the age of twenty-seven, it pleased God to touch his heart more powerfully, and this time he marked as the beginning of his entire change and perfect consecration to the service of God. From this period, he became a burning and

few instances; so that it is not (as I was at first apt to suppose) the common privilege of all that are 'perfect in love.'"*

The above quotations sufficiently shew, that these peculiar sentiments were, at the time alluded to, entertained only by few individuals; and it is believed such experience is, at present, rarely heard of. Christians will doubtless form different opinions on this subject. Some, probably, with an unbecoming temerity, and without hesitation, will proscribe the whole of it as undisguised mysticism:—others will impute it to a misguiding imagination:—many will conclude, that, what was peculiar, might arise from the mind dwelling particularly on the different parts of the Divine economy, in the work of human redemption. Others again, will refer it to the difficulty of clothing in mortal language, the pure and sublime enjoyments of "a soul in commerce with her God:"—while a few, from a correspondence of feeling and enjoyment, may find

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shining light, adorning in all things the doctrine of God his Saviour. But his race was short: he died at Paris, on the 24th of April, 1649, in the 38th year of his age. The passage in his Life, to which Mr. W. alludes above, is as follows:—"I bear in me ordinarily, an experimental verity, and a plenitude of the most Holy Trinity, which elevates me to a simple view of God; and with that I do all that his Providence enjoins me, not regarding any thing for their greatness or littleness, but only the order of God, and the glory they may render Him."—*See an Extract of the Life of M. de Renty, by Mr. Wesley.*

* Wesley's Works, 8vo. vol. xvi. p. 201, 202.

no difficulty in receiving, without any qualification, the testimony of such persons as de Renty, Perronet, and Maxwell. All, however, will do well to remember, that, it is a subject not of *speculation*, but of *experience*. This may tend to throw around our decisions the chastenings of a becoming modesty: it may lead to the humble inquiry, How far am I qualified to decide at all? It may even tend to suspend the judgement, and to save from the folly of hasty dogmatism, until we have attained to the same entire devotedness to God, as had been attained by the pious Lady, whose testimony we are at present canvassing. And all will do well to remark, that her Ladyship only deemed those manifestations of mercy valuable, in proportion as they tended to transform her into the Divine likeness. Besides, whatever may be the opinions entertained on this subject, we shall not err, if we still say with Mr. Wesley, when writing to one of the above pious individuals, "There is nothing deeper, there is nothing better, in heaven, or earth, than *love!* There cannot be, unless there were something higher than the God of love. So that we see distinctly what we have to aim at. We see the prize, and the way to it. Here is the height, here is the depth of Christian experience! "God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.'"*

* See *Wesley's Works*, vol. xvi. p. 243.

* "He (says Jeremy Taylor,) who goes about to speak of the mystery of the Trinity, and does it by words and names

Lady M—'s benevolence also continued to expand in proportion to her piety: her faith and

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of man's invention; talking of essences and existences, hypostases and personalities, priorities in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, may amuse himself, and build a tabernacle in his head, and talk of something he knows not what: but the good man, who *feels* the power of the FATHER; to whom the SON is become *wisdom*, *sanctification*, and *righteousness*—and in whose heart the SPIRIT is *shed abroad*: this man, though he understands nothing of what is unintelligible, yet he alone *truly understands* the Christian doctrine of the Trinity."

The Editor knows no author, who has written on this sublime doctrine, with such an immediate reference to the experience and privileges of believers, as Dr. John Owen, in his valuable work, entitled, "*Of* COMMUNION *with* GOD *the* FATHER, SON, *and* HOLY GHOST, *(each* PERSON *distinctly) in* LOVE, GRACE, *and* CONSOLATION." And he would earnestly recommend to his pious reader, especially if called to minister in the sanctuary, a diligent and serious perusal of this *devout* and able treatise. It is presumed, that he would then feel less difficulty in admitting any peculiarity in phraseology, or strength of expression, he may meet with in the present volume. This justly celebrated writer, after having enlarged on the nature of communion in general, proceeds with his usual ability to shew, "That the saints have distinct communion with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, (that is, distinctly with the FATHER, and distinctly with the SON, and distinctly with the HOLY SPIRIT,) and in what the peculiar appropriation of this distinct communion, unto the several persons, doth consist."

Those who would prefer a judicious abridgement of this work, freed from the peculiarities of the author's creed, may meet with it in the "Christian Library," vol. x. p. 469, &c.

works still walked hand in hand. Though she had, by the wise providence of God, recently entered upon a new and extensive field of labour, which was likely to occasion much solicitude, and to afford ample scope for the exercise of all her powers; she was still on the look-out for fresh schemes of usefulness, for new methods of doing good. She had for years thankfully witnessed the gracious effects produced by the religious instruction of children, fostered by her maternal care in her own charity-school; and was thus well prepared to hail, and welcome, the dawn of a new and glorious era, which had already begun to shed its light and influence, and to dispel the darkness, which, for generations, had fatally brooded around the habitations of the British poor. About five or six years previous to this period, the immortal RAIKES had commenced his benevolent operations in the city of Gloucester; his example and success had in a measure roused the attention of the humane and pious, and SUNDAY SCHOOL establishments were gradually rising up in England to adorn and exalt our country, and to carry the tidings of salvation, and the blessings of Christianity, into the most humble dwelling, of the most obscure hamlet, in our land.

The first intelligence of these important and salutary efforts would doubtless be received by her Ladyship with joyful emotion; and while others were hesitating and perplexing themselves with doubtful conjectures, she hastened to class

herself with the most zealous and active patrons of Sabbath-day schools. It does not appear that any thing in this way had as yet been attempted in Scotland; and the majority, even among the well-disposed, were for some time inclined to think, that the regular parochial schools, established in the southern parts of that enlightened country, superseded the necessity of any other means for the instruction of the rising generation. So far as a common education, or a mere ability to read, is concerned, this might be true; but still the chief, the essential object, aimed at by Sabbath-schools, was wanting—the serious and solemn inculcation of religious principle, and of religious precept. Lady M— and other pious associates perceived, that, as it respected the observance of the Sabbath, and the more direct business of religious instruction, the children of Scotland, like those of the sister kingdom, were entirely left to the care of their parents; multitudes of whom, indifferent to the welfare of their own souls, felt no solicitude for the salvation of their offspring. Commiserating the case of these unfortunate youth, Lady M— promptly determined to establish several Sabbath-schools under her own immediate patronage; and applied to her correspondents in England, for such information as might help to guide her in the prosecution of her pious purpose.

This spark of benevolence being once elicited, soon burst into a holy flame; and in the course of this year, the friends of religion in Edinburgh,

formed the pious resolution of collecting together, on the evening of each returning Sabbath, as many of the children of the poor as possible, for the express purpose of imparting to them religious knowledge. This institution is still in active and very extensive operation. Its friends and supporters had for a season to struggle against the influence of prejudice; but, happily for the poor children of North Britain, these prejudices, in general, have long since been subdued. Patient and persevering, though noiseless activity in this labour of love, by different denominations of Christians, has finally succeeded: and, instead of having still to encounter a cold and doubting opposition, they now see the religious instruction of youth, by Sabbath-schools, resorted to, from their own metropolis to the remotest corners of the land. But we ought never to forget, how much we are indebted to those pious individuals, who *first*, almost solitary and alone, broke up the *fallow ground*; and, in spite of the sullenness of indifference, the scowl of suspicion, and the sneer of contempt, continued to sow the *good seed*:—*they* laboured, and *we* have entered into their labours.*

But Lady M— shall again speak for herself.

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* In order to revive and encourage the numerous schools already in existence, and to accelerate the formation of others throughout the country, an institution, denominated "THE SABBATH SCHOOL UNION FOR SCOTLAND," was established at Edinburgh, in the beginning of 1816. In less

LETTER XLIV.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Coates, Jan. 5, 1787.

I unite with you in praising our gracious God, who deals so bountifully with you, in sickness and in health; how great is his goodness. It is also matter of thankfulness, that he has enlarged your sphere of usefulness. How high the honour, how rich the privilege, to live and act for God. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." He hath lately increased my fellowship with heaven:—time seems with me, almost swallowed up in eternity. In meditation, I dwell much in that *unbounded space.* How contracted are our views, while confined within the limits of time; here there

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than a year after its commencement, the Committee had the pleasure of reporting, that, 324 schools, containing 22,827 children, were already embraced under their bond of Union. The Editor has not in his possession a later Report, but believes that the field of operation has been greatly enlarged, and that these benevolent efforts are still continued with unabated vigour and increasing success.

From the recent important suggestions, and powerful reasonings of that eminent philanthropist and divine, the Rev. Dr. Chalmers, may we not hope that a host of new operators, and new energies, will be called into action; and that the ultimate object of diffusing religious light and influence throughout the whole mass of the rising generation, will, at least, be greatly accelerated.—*Vide the Christian and Civic Economy of large Towns.*

are no objects in any degree adequate to the vast desires of an immortal soul: but viewing eternity, what a boundless prospect appears, what a full scope may we there give to our most extensive wishes. There all our holy affections may roam at large, and find abundance of objects, perfectly suited, in kind and duration, to their nature.

The Lord has taught me many important lessons within these six months, and I feel very desirous of learning every thing he would have me to know. Every new acquisition of Divine and experimental knowledge, leads to fresh discoveries of my ignorance. Though the Lord deals thus kindly with me, I have not that degree of evidence, that perfectly satisfies me, that the work of sanctification is fully wrought in my soul; yet I think it increases. And what matter of praise is it, that now, when I am obliged to be so much more than ever formerly, occupied in temporal affairs, my mind is not deranged by them; that still the whole bent of my soul is to God. The more he gives me of the world, the more clearly he makes me see its emptiness;—it recedes, it disappears, it lessens in my view. A considerable part of Lady G—'s fortune is, by her, appropriated to different purposes, which gives me much to do; but I see it, as the work the Lord has assigned me, and I engage on this account, the more heartily in it; but I have much need of the prayers of God's people, for a large increase of heavenly wisdom. I doubt not you will continue to bear me, and my burthens,

before the Lord; and do entreat him, that all *his* will in this affair may take place; that his counsel may stand.

It gave me pain to be so near you in October last, and not to see you; but it was necessarily so. I found it good to mingle with the excellent ones of the earth at that time. When called in providence to be again in the South, I hope to enjoy the privilege of visiting your peaceful habitation. O that every revolving season may meet us pressing on in the heavenly road; ripening apace for eternity; filling up the few remaining moments for, and with our God. And at last, may an abundant entrance be administered unto us. May we enter the heavenly port in full sail.

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER XLV.

TO THE REV. ALEX. MATHER.

Coates, January 16, 1787.

I am much indebted to you, Rev. Sir, for your kind attention to my best interests; but infinitely more so, to your dear Lord and Master, who has dealt very bountifully with me since my last to you. Some little time ago, the Lord Jesus visited my soul, in a most delightful manner, when joining with a Christian friend in prayer, praise, &c. I feel a *poverty* of expression, when I attempt to say what I enjoyed at that time: words cannot convey an adequate idea of it.

Jesus sweetly attracted my heart, and arrested all the affectionate powers of my soul. He appeared in his native beauty, shining with the milder beams of his mediatorial glory. In the evening of the same day, while hearing a sermon preached in my own house, God the Father, in *solemn majesty*, drew near. I felt sensibly the approach of Deity: I seemed filled with a heaven of silent love and sacred awe. Since then, my fellowship has been uninterruptedly with the Father and with the Son. In secret prayer and meditation, I am permitted to converse with my God and Saviour, as a man with his friend; nay, even when engaged in worldly business, this heavenly intercourse is not suspended. What is man, that God should deal thus wonderfully with him! I write thus particularly to *you*, because I know both Mrs. Mather and you were much interested in my spiritual prosperity. My unbelief is now almost conquered: but still I feel led to cry mightily to the Lord, that he may give me still stronger evidence of *the work* being wrought. Satan says, it is only an increase of communion with heaven; therefore, I plead for the most *unequivocal* marks of *sanctification*. In the mean time, my enjoyment is great; not *ecstatic joy;* but peace, Divine peace, flowing as a river, constantly supplied by believing views of the Father and Son.

Thus far I had written yesterday, when necessary avocations called me away. To-day, I resume my pen, and with it, the delightful theme

of redeeming love. I feel pressed in spirit to testify anew of the loving-kindness of the Lord. He fed me last night and this morning on angels' food. I was permitted to come very near, even to the footstool of his throne, and to ask what I would. I seemed to have power to prevail with God. Whatever unbelief may afterwards suggest, I certainly, *at present*, through super-abounding mercy, dwell in love, and in God, and God in me. Yet still I thirst for more:

> "Insatiate, to the spring I fly,
> I drink, and yet am ever dry."

But still I have no rapturous joy; no, it is the calm serenity of a summer's day, without a cloud, that fills, yea, overflows my soul. O to Jesus how infinitely indebted. I hope Mrs. M— and you will assist me with your prayers, that the Lord may confirm and establish my soul: that he may maintain what he has wrought for me, and not suffer any enemy whatever to rob me of it. I cannot help remarking, how well-timed the goodness of the Lord is; how peculiarly suited is this sensible increase, to the situation I have been in for many months; *immersed* in temporal business, which as yet is enveloped in confusion and difficulty; sufficient to dissipate the mind altogether, at least, the mind of a *female*. Through mercy, upon the whole, I have been kept calm on tumult's wheel; enabled to commit all to him who rules in heaven and earth: only asking, that *his* will may take place, and *all his* counsel stand. I hope matters are at

last drawing towards a crisis I now wait the *ultimatum* of *Doctors' Commons*. This, as the *derniere resort*, must determine upon which *Will* administration is to be granted. Wishing you, and your wife, every spiritual blessing, I remain, Rev. Sir, your obliged, faithful, humble servant in the Lord, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER XLVI.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

Feb. 2, 1787.

Since my last, the Lord has again made bare his holy arm in my behalf.

> "Where shall my wondering soul begin to tell
> His love, immense, unsearchable:"
> "All my words are faint,
> *Celestial love*, no eloquence can paint."

Suffice it to say, the Lord has kindled such a flame of Divine love in my heart, as I trust will never be extinguished; but burn brighter and brighter, till it mingles with the blaze of eternal day. To confirm my soul in the grace given, my God again came down in *solemn majesty*. This *sacred grandeur*, peculiarly marks of late my intercourse with the Father. My soul sensibly felt his solemn approach; and said, without a voice, *God is here*. Soon after, the powers of darkness, if not commissioned, were permitted, to level all their envenomed darts against me, and I sustained a hot engagement

for many hours: but felt determined, through grace, not to yield an hair's breath to the enemy; nor to rest satisfied without a *decided victory*. This, through super-abounding mercy, I obtained. The following day, being Sunday, I took the sacrament at the Octagon, where I enjoyed nothing very remarkable; but in my way home to Coates, the Lord Jesus drew near; not in the overwhelming greatness of sovereign majesty, or the dazzling brightness of unveiled glory; no, it was Deity, clothed with the robes of mediatoral glory, that, with an irresistible attraction, absorbed the affectionate powers of my soul. He condescended to converse with his creature, and permitted me to speak to him as a man with his friend.

> "No more can be in mortal sounds exprest,
> But vast eternity shall tell the rest."

If a *taste* of Divine love be thus transporting, what ecstasies must the happy soul enjoy, when permitted to drink *its fill* at those streams, that flow from the throne of God for ever. Some hours after, when conversing with a friend, my condescending Lord again came nigh, and drew my heart from earth away, and all created good. But great as were these two glorious interviews, they were small, compared with a third I was favoured with that same night. When musing alone on the goodness of God, Jesus came to me, with such a fulness of light, of love, of heaven, as well nigh overwhelmed my ravished soul. The

intercourse was so near, so heavenly, I really began to think the period was at hand, when my connexion with mortality would be dissolved. Surely I was much awake to the life of heaven-born spirits: surely I tasted all the joy of angels. My happy soul cried out,

> "O love divine, all love excelling,
> Joy of heaven, to earth come down."

It was immediately suggested, that what I most needed, was greater degrees of conformity to the Divine image. I then earnestly pleaded that my gracious Lord would bestow this upon me. In these repeated interviews with heaven, though admitted into communion with the Triune Deity, I experienced no *extatic transport of joy*, but a *calm delighting* in all the silent heaven of Divine love; how unspeakably great my obligations to sovereign grace! My communion and fellowship, is at some times, to *my apprehension*, more peculiarly with the Father; at other times, with the Son, as two *distinct* Persons of the Trinity, though the same in substance. My perception of the personality of the Holy Ghost, is not so clear. I seem to know him best as a Divine agent, for the Father and the Son, if I may so speak. Is this scriptural experience? I write thus particularly to *you*, because I find your letters peculiarly useful to me, as I did your conversation when in the South; and I wish to use every help for the establishment of my soul. I dread sinking in any measure from that degree of spiritual life I now enjoy. Nature would impose silence, but

grace forbids the prohibition. I therefore endeavour to do violence, in this respect, to my natural temper; and speak of the goodness of the Lord to my soul, as *Christian prudence* directs; but my present situation admits of few opportunities.

I rejoice to hear that the work of the Lord prospers in your hands, and that Mrs. W— is made a happy partaker of the pure love of God. I pray that many witnesses of it may be raised up; with you, with us, and in every part of the Lord's vineyard. I believe I stand alone here, which calls for great grace, and a very clear work, both as to the witness and the fruit. I do hope all the features of the new creature are drawn upon my soul, but many retouches of the Divine pencil will be necessary to perfect the work. The work appears to me as yet small, though ripening into maturity; therefore, I feel a little shy to say much about it. I should sooner believe your account of the matter, if I did not think you viewed it through a *partial* medium. I return grateful thanks for your kind attention, and Mrs. M—'s; and am, Rev. Sir, your much obliged humble servant in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER XLVII.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

Coates, March 11, 1787.

I know you wish to hear of the prosperity of my soul, and I am thankful I can say, the Lord

still continues to do me good. He keeps me constantly looking to him, for the continuance of his favour, and an increase of grace. God the Father has again condescended to visit my soul, (after a pretty severe struggle with the powers of darkness:) that moment, there was a heavenly calm diffused through my mind, peace was proclaimed in all my borders, and a loving sacred awe seized all my powers, though the manifestation was not so very remarkable as the preceding one. Since then, God the Son, also, has deigned to visit his devoted creature, and with him comes a heaven of love. He draws near, and with an irresistible, Divine sweetness, attracts all the affectionate powers of my soul; as sensibly as the load-stone does the steel. My intercourse with the Second Person of the glorious Trinity, produceth sensations different, than when called to stand in the immediate presence of God the Father. The former is attended with inexpressible delight, and Divine sweetness; heaven fills every corner of the soul: the latter is preceded by, and brings with it, a deep, solemn sense of Majesty; a holy reverential awe rests upon my mind: the creature sinks into nothing before its great Creator. Yet this is so tempered with Divine love, as to exclude every degree of dread. O the height, and depth, of redeeming love: the line of our reason is by far too short to fathom it: but as "the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul" to prove its utmost extent. Prayer is now my chief employ.

to it, and there abode, in spite of all I feared or felt, that was painful. Had I given way to evil reasoning, in the smallest degree, I found I should have plunged myself to utter darkness and misery. It is, on these very trying occasions, hard work to resist it; so strong is the propensity of the human mind to call to our aid, in religious matters, what we find so necessary for direction in worldly affairs: but, reason, though enlightened, I find, is utterly unable to extricate us out of the fascinating power of temptation, and the labyrinths of perplexity into which temptation often involves the soul. But what *it* could not do, because of weakness, I found effected by the mighty power of *simple faith*. I looked to Jesus as my only hope, and though I did not obtain immediate relief, yet the happy consequences soon proved the propriety of the expedient. Jesus drew nigh, and brought with him a heaven of peace and love. The powers of hell, and their dark suggestions, before him fled away; and as one whom his mother comforteth, so he comforted my soul; and has most graciously condescended again and again to repeat these heavenly visits: O that they may prove of a transforming nature. My soul breathes ardently after *positive* holiness. I find that I can not rest satisfied with any partial attainment in the Divine life; and great is my encouragement to press on, for all that Christ has purchased,—that God is willing to bestow, or I am able to receive. The goodness of the Lord is a strong stimulative,

and a deep consciousness of my spiritual poverty, prompts me forward. I do indeed feel poor and needy, though the Lord deals bountifully with me. Yesterday (the Lord's day) he made his goodness to pass before me in a remarkable manner, while attending public worship. My former visitations from on high, were either from God the Father alone, or from God the Son alone, or from both together; on this happy occasion, it was from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. I was favoured with a clear view of the Trinity, which I never had before; and enjoyed fellowship with a triune God. This filled my soul with a solemn awe and heavenly sweetness. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and felt my mind fixed in deep contemplation upon that glorious, incomprehensible object, the ever-blessed Trinity. Hitherto, I have been led to view the Holy Ghost chiefly as an agent, now I behold him distinctly, as the third Person of the Trinity. I have in my own soul an *experimental proof* of the truth of this doctrine, but find human language perfectly insufficient for speaking, or writing, intelligibly upon the subject. Eternity alone can unfold the sacred mystery; but in the mean time, what we may, and do comprehend of it, is replete with comfort to the Christian.

I stole a little time yesterday from business to write you, but could not finish my letter; and this morning, I find fresh cause to repeat the wondrous tale of God's goodness to my soul.

My Jesus is with me to-day in a peculiar manner; shining sweetly upon my mind as altogether lovely. Surely his love is better than wine. I have been delightfully let into him, in secret prayer; and asking in faith, have received out of his fulness.

"O love Divine, all love's excelling!"

Still I am favoured with a clear and distinct perception of the three Sacred Persons. Assist me with your prayers, that I may improve to the utmost the goodness of my God.

I have been insensibly led, for months past, to speak and write with unusual freedom to you; I trust some good end is to be answered by it. Can you inform me where a letter will find Mr. Wesley just now? or do you know if he intends being in Scotland this summer? Will you be so good as to send me the rules of some of the best-regulated Sunday Schools, with the form of advertisement previous to their being opened; and also the amount of the teachers' salary. The people of Scotland are not fond of them, but I mean to give them a trial. Poor children, in general, have greater opportunities for being taught through the week here, than in England; but as our manufactories increase, these will of course lessen. Shall I make an apology for taking up so much of your time? With good wishes for yourself, Mrs. M—, and your amiable Son, I remain, Rev. Sir, your faithful humble servant in Christian bonds,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER XLIX.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

May 14, 1787.

Your last letter, Rev. Sir, is replete with profitable matter; and of a kind to which I am not accustomed from the generality of my Christian correspondents; yet of that nature which suits me better than any other, and which, properly guarded, might be of great utility to the church of Christ. At present, it seems hid from the eyes of many worthy teachers in it, and valuable members of it. Is not this a sufficient reason, why you, who so thoroughly understand the matter, should not remain silent, should not hide your talent in a napkin, but with all the ability God has given you, endeavour to *re-introduce* this important doctrine into the Christian world. It would be doing an essential service to the Church of Christ. Do consider and weigh the matter well. I would gladly hope, a greater end than the profit of my soul, is to be answered by what you have already written me upon the subject. That my *natural* and *constitutional* shyness is so conquered in writing to you, I must resolve into the will of God for wise ends. But I would now change my subject from doctrine, to experience, and mention the loving-kindness of the Lord; who not only disappoints my fears, but exceeds my expectations.

Since the memorable period already mentioned to you, my experience has consisted chiefly of a calm, sweet, uninterrupted fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Till yesterday, I felt a sensible increase of nearness to Jesus, which brought more love, and a still clearer view of him. Help me to praise him, who deals so bountifully with me. How rich, how precious his kindness to me for months past! Perhaps, without such a degree of it, I should have sunk into the mire of secular affairs; in which I am still in some measure immersed, but I enjoy a nearer prospect of emerging than for some time past. I believe *duty* will call me to different parts of England this summer. I shall be glad to know where Providence casts your lot. It is a great source of satisfaction to me, that the reins of providential government are continually in the hands of our God: it precludes anxiety and murmuring. Under such wise administration, there can be no just ground for complaint. In order to reconcile this with the liberty of the creature, (for man must be a free agent, else he cannot be accountable), I have supposed the freedom of action was the privilege of man, but the *consequences* of these actions, the peculiar prerogative of the Most High: and having the absolute disposal of *these*, he is, with great propriety, styled the moral governor of the world. But, to waive this digression, I would return to a still more delightful subject—I mean, Divine love. I believe *humble love* is the highest, choicest gift of heaven;

This I prefer to every thing else, and think no discovery, no manifestation whatever, can do me any good, but as it proves a means of confirming, or increasing, this holy, heavenly principle. I would be filled with this humble love. I still feel something wanting in my experience, I mean a clearer witness from the Spirit, of the work of sanctification: I should then with more freedom speak *explicitly* of it. Surely he who hath done so much for me, will not withhold this. O that he may enable me to sink into all the depths of humble love, and rise to all the heights of Christian confidence.

I shall be much obliged to you for a particular account of the best-managed Sunday Schools: and am, Rev. Sir, your faithful humble servant in the Lord, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER L.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

June 21, 1787.

I feel constrained once more to resume my pen, for the pleasing employment of making mention of the loving-kindness of him, whose goodness you have so long experienced. Last time I wrote you, I studiously avoided professing any thing concerning the witness of the Spirit for sanctification, as I did not enjoy it, at least, according to the judgement I had formed of it. That the Lord had condescended to increase my communion with heaven, I could not deny;

—that He had given me wonderful displays of his greatness, and power, and majesty, as God the Father, was also certain;—that he had made Jesus, in all his mediatorial glory in bright effulgence, often pass before me, and converse with me, was likewise matter of fact;—and that he had shown me, by faith, the personality of the Holy Ghost, and in some measure explained that oneness of substance, equality of power and glory, that exists in the Sacred Three, I was as morally certain as of my own existence: but to believe that sin was *all done away*, I had not evidence sufficient to convince me; or, if at bottom there was a secret hope it might be so, yet I had no freedom to declare it to others. In this uncertain state, I continued for some months, pleading earnestly with the Lord, for that degree of evidence which would effectually banish every shadow of doubt. I cannot enumerate the numberless ways and means a gracious God took to conquer the remains of unbelief. Eternity alone can unfold the mystery of his matchless goodness to me. Suffice it to say, that last week I felt increasing power to yield to the motions of the Spirit, which have since ripened into a Divine testimony; and I can no longer doubt that the bitter root is destroyed. In some small measure the fruit, as well as the Spirit, concurs in witnessing this to my soul. I know you will join me in praising him who has dealt thus bountifully with me. I feel deeply conscious of my weakness, but no propensity to discouragement.

I trust it will prove a happy preservative against those evils to which I may be now chiefly exposed. Did my time, or your's, permit, I could say much more, but I am obliged to conclude. I would only add, that *now* the Lord has made an entire conquest of a heart, that has long wished to yield to him, but which has been prevented by listening to an enemy. I hope it will for ever remain in the hands of the right owner; and not only continue emptied of evil, but be also filled with all the communicable fulness of Jehovah. In haste, your faithful, humble servant, D. MAXWELL.

P. S. My Sunday School was opened last Lord's-day, containing 31 scholars. Pray for its prosperity. I have taken measures for opening another about 25 miles south of Edinburgh, under the inspection of Mr. Boyd, from England.

LETTER LI.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Coates, June 26, 1787.

DEAR MISS RITCHIE,

As you have kindly taken an interest in my spiritual concerns, for some years, I feel a call to inform you of the great goodness of the Lord to my soul for some past months. Indeed, it is more than human language can express. Since January last, he has been sensibly increasing my little stock; not only making wonderful discoveries to me of the glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost,

as distinct Persons, yet the same in substance, equal in power and glory; but also allowing me such nearness to, and deep communion with the Sacred Three, as was at times almost too much for the clay tenement, and seemed in a great measure to break off my connexion with mortality. O the heavenly, the inexpressibly delightful interviews with the Lord Jesus, with which I have often been lately indulged. I cannot convey any adequate idea of them; perhaps your own experience will much better inform you. At times the solemn grandeur of heavenly Majesty was sweetly tempered and softened by redeeming love. At other seasons, I have been called to stand in the presence of the Most High God himself: then, sacred awe filled my soul, and all around seemed filled with the presence of Jehovah; I felt as if I stood on holy ground. At other times, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost have so surrounded me, as made me to prove, in the full extent of the words, the "overwhelming power of saving grace." This last manifestation was in April last, when partaking of the Lord's Supper, and continued for many weeks: a measure of it I still enjoy. Numberless have been the gracious visits I have been favoured with since then, but still I was not satisfied, the Spirit did not witness the destruction of sin; and without it, I could not rest: yet I felt very thankful for what the Lord had done for me. I had often a secret hope that I had received the blessing, but durst not say so to others; and the

enemy did all in his power to prevent me. At times, the whole powers of darkness seemed let loose upon me, and then I went through the most painful exercises of mind, yet felt as if strengthened to endure a greater agony. But he who is rich in mercy, did not permit these severe conflicts to last long; in due time he rebuked the adversary, and poured the healing balm of his love into my soul. Again, I went on my way rejoicing, wrestling in prayer for that degree of *unequivocal evidence* of sanctification, which would fully satisfy both myself and others. The Lord used various means to conquer the last remains of unbelief. For some days, I felt him powerfully and sweetly at work upon my soul. I obtained increasing power to yield to the motions of the Spirit, and in a very short time they terminated in a clear witness. This, through mercy, has abode with me ever since. I can now no longer doubt that the bitter root is destroyed. A small measure of the fruit concurs in bearing this testimony. How shall I sufficiently praise him, who has dealt thus wonderfully with me; and so seasonably timed these great and glorious displays of his love and power, when I was necessarily so thoroughly occupied with secular affairs, as might have proved very detrimental to my soul. O the height, and depth of redeeming love! What angel tongue can tell. Did my time permit, I could have said much more, but business calls. In haste, with Christian love,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LII.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Coates, July 25, 1787.

Having hinted in former letters, that the Lord did not witness by his Spirit to the work of sanctification which he had wrought in my soul, his goodness now constrains me to say, this is no longer the case. He shines now with meridian brightness upon his own work. There, in his light, I see light, and feel *full* liberty to testify that the bitter root is destroyed. How shall I sufficiently praise him, who has dealt thus graciously with me. The wonderful displays of the power, glory, and goodness of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which I have enjoyed since the commencement of this year, though matter of unspeakable thankfulness, could in no wise satisfy, while a doubt remained, that the Canaanites were not wholly driven out of the land. For this I besought the Lord, with a degree of importunity his own Spirit bestowed; therefore, he heard the prayer, and, for the sake of Jesus, gave me the desire of my heart. I am now brought into the wealthy place; kept in the immediate presence of Jehovah; privileged to see the King in his beauty, with the land that is afar off; enjoying the continual abode of his Spirit; surrounded with the peaceful presence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and have, in a small measure, the depths of the Godhead made known to me. But over all this glory, my God has created a defence, by giving me deeply to feel, that I *only stand by faith.*

I rejoice with trembling, sweetly tempered with that perfect love that casteth out fear. Through the tender mercy of my God, thus emptied of evil, I look forward, and enjoy the soul-animating prospect of being filled with all the communicable fulness of Jehovah. You will, I know, cordially join with me in offering up the willing tribute of praise, so justly due to our God, who has, at last, made an entire conquest of a heart that has long wished to prove his utmost salvation and fulness of love. But business calls, and I must answer. The Lord has *fully* convinced me that the work is *his;* he has reserved *it* for me, brought me to *it*, and gives me to believe (however in one sense unequal to the task) he will carry me through it, unblameable in his sight, and irreproveable before man. It is the doing of the Lord, and may well be marvellous in my sight. That you may feel a growing power to glorify and enjoy your God; that I may "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free," and hourly add to my little stock; be active and zealous, faithful and fruitful; let us, with a holy importunity, night and day, wrestle with the Hearer of prayer, and he will answer us; for ourselves, and for the prosperity of his Zion. Permit me also to recommend to your earnest prayers my youngest brother, who lies dangerously ill, and, I fear, not prepared for the great change.

Believe me, dear Miss Ritchie, with Christian love, your fellow-traveller to the New Jerusalem,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LIII.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

September 7, 1787.

REV. SIR,

I intended sooner to have thanked you for your attention in sending the Rules for the Sunday Schools; but have been much and necessarily occupied in that business the Lord has committed to me. But O, what cause of thankfulness, that with Martha's careful hands, he also gives me Mary's loving heart. I still have fresh, yea daily cause to tell of the loving-kindness of the Lord. He continues his goodness, he repeats the remarkable manifestations of his love, as flowing from the Sacred Three; distinctly discovered by faith as separate persons, yet, inexplicably united. My soul is abundantly more established in the grace given, than when I last wrote you. I now enjoy the constant, dare I say, the full abode of the Spirit? Perhaps that is going too far: I would rather err on the safe side. Yet I feel liberty to say, *Father, Son,* and *Holy Ghost,* continually encamp around me; and

"Not a cloud does arise, to darken the skies,
Or hide, for a moment, the Lord from my eyes."

Wherever I move, I meet the object of my love. I left Scotland on Tuesday last; and have since been in constant motion; daily conversing with different persons, and engaged in various business: yet, through the abundant goodness of my God,

my mind is not in the least deranged by these diversified scenes. "O wondrous power of sovereign grace!"

I am glad to find by letters from Mr. Wesley, and Dr. Coke, at Guernsey, that the prospect opens so fair and extensive for the spread of the gospel in the West India Islands. May the time speedily commence, when all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ. Within these few months I have opened three Sunday Schools, upon the plan you sent me: two in England, and one in Scotland. May the Lord succeed every attempt to promote his cause in the world. With Christian good wishes to Mrs. Mather, and yourself, I remain,

Rev. Sir,

Your obliged humble servant, and friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LIV.

TO THE REV. CHARLES ATMORE, GLASGOW.

Coates, October 10, 1787.

I am pleased to see by your letter, that your gracious God is owning your labours, and comforting your own soul. Shall I congratulate you upon a complete victory over all your inward foes? Are the Canaanites wholly driven out of the land? If so, I would say, hail happy soul! whose heart is now a quiet dwelling,

"Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone."

if otherwise, permit me to say,—O rest not till thus blessed! Cry earnestly to God, and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple, never more to depart.

I am a witness of his faithfulness and power. I proved a mighty exertion of both in my little excursion to the South; when, in the diversified scenes I went through, all the powers of action, both of body and mind, were called forth, and kept on the stretch, sometimes from morning until night. Yet, through the tender mercy of my God, my mind was preserved uniformly staid upon himself; my fellowship, without interruption, was with the Father and the Son; and my evidence for sanctification strong as a cable fixed to an immoveable rock; and bright as the sun shining at noon-day! This was the Lord's doing, and truly wonderful in my eyes. What shall I, what can I render unto the Lord for all his goodness? O may my future life speak his praise, and evince my gratitude.

Since I came home, the Lord has been very gracious. While I now write, I feel a sweet sense of the presence of God. I thus write, not to make known my own attainments, but for the encouragement of others, and to the glory of the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

When God is at work, either among a people, or in the heart of an individual, the adversary of souls is peculiarly at work also: a belief of the former should prevent discouragement, and a fear of the latter stir up to much prayer. O the

power of faithful prayer! I live by prayer. May you prove its sovereign efficacy in every difficult case, and find the apostle's request for the Colossians (chap. i. 9, 10,) answered in your own soul. I am pleased to hear, that Mrs. Atmore's sphere of usefulness is enlarged, and her soul happy.

Enclosed is the widow's mite towards liquidating the debt incurred by erecting galleries. We go on much as usual in Edinburgh. More life is much wanted. May the Lord pour out his Spirit! then the barren wilderness shall become a fruitful field.

Repeated interruptions, &c. oblige me to conclude. Praying for peace and prosperity among your people, and the continuance of both in your own, and Mrs. Atmore's soul,

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your faithful, humble servant in Christ,

D. MAXWELL.

P. S. I have many demands, yet, if funds are low, add another guinea, and I will repay it.

LETTER LV.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

December 1, 1787.

What has become of Mr. Mather, my profitable correspondent? I should suppose my last has never come to hand; as it is now about two

months since I wrote, and have had no reply to my letter, I mentioned a small excursion I had made into England, upon business; but I went no further than Workington, in Cumberland, and of consequence had little profitable intercourse with Christians; yet experienced much, very much, of the delightful and gracious presence of my God, even in that barren clime. I find his mercy sweetens every toil; makes every region please; and since I came home, the Lord has wonderfully exerted his omnipotent power in carrying me over mountains of difficulties in my important engagement, and through pretty severe exercises of mind: in both, I proved my God a present help; a strong hold in the day of trouble. Often, after these trying seasons, he, as it were, rends the heavens and comes down; appears in Majesty Divine; puts my foes to flight, and drowns all my fears and painful feelings in the ocean of redeeming love. At other times, when, perhaps, for hours, I have been necessarily engaged in secular affairs, a fear has arisen, lest by so doing I should sink from that happy state into which I have been brought: then, quick as lightning, Jesus appears himself; comes down as rain upon the mown grass; makes my soul as the chariots of Aminadab; and strengthens me to leap over a wall, or to overcome a troop. Sometimes, when meditating upon what the Lord has done for me, or when hearing the word preached, the Sacred Three draw near as distinct persons, and yet, to my view and apprehension, *one*, in a

manner inexplicable. I much wish to improve these gracious visitations to the utmost. My soul, night and day, feeds upon the word of God in secret, which, with prayer, is the means from which I reap most profit. You see how freely I still write, having given you an abstract of the Lord's dealings with me for months past.

I believe, if the Lord will, I shall be obliged to go to Bristol some time in the end of January, or beginning of February, upon Lady G.'s chapel business. It is to be opened about that time. This is a new concern, and I feel a little awkward in it; but being called to it, I must endeavour to go through with it as the Lord shall assist. There is a depth in Providence in this dispensation I have not yet been able to fathom. I find the line, both of reason and faith, too short to get to the bottom of it; but I leave it to the Lord, and only wish to fulfil his will in it.—With my best wishes to Mrs. Mather, I remain,

Rev. Sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

1788.

Particulars respecting Hope Chapel—Lady H. visits Bristol—forms an Intimacy with Mrs. Johnson—short Account of Correspondence continued.

LAND had been purchased, by the joint benevolence of the Ladies Glenorchy and Hope, on which to erect a chapel, at the Hot Wells, near Bristol. These Ladies had frequently visited this place; not to unite in the frivolities of fashionable life, but solely to seek for benefit from the long-famed salubrity of its waters. They had witnessed the dissipation and folly, which reigned triumphant throughout all ranks, with sincere regret; and lamented the want of an awakening and spiritual ministry; and the paucity of places for the public worship of God, at a situation where hundreds annually resort, who particularly need the consolations of the gospel. Influenced by these impressions, they determined on the erection of a chapel; but before they could accomplish their pious design, they were both called to the joy of their Lord. By the appointment of Lady Glenorchy, it became

the duty of Lady Maxwell to carry this design into effect. After all the arrangements which could be made by means of letters, she hastened to the spot, personally to examine into every particular connected with the business, and to adopt measures best calculated to secure the objects aimed at by her departed friends. She left Edinburgh on the 11th of October in this year, and after inspecting the various chapels under her care, which lay in her road, arrived at Bristol on the 27th. She entered into the concern under much discouragement, but with confidence, that as the cause was the Lord's, he would favour her with all necessary and seasonable assistance. She had to encounter many and great difficulties, but was enabled to surmount them; though she has not, either in her Diary or Correspondence, stated particulars. The chapel, however, was ultimately erected, and being desirous to perpetuate the memory of her "Dear Daughter," she named it "Hope Chapel." This chapel, as will be seen, afterwards became to her Ladyship a source of painful solicitude: but had we materials, it would be away from the object of this work, to enter into any lengthened detail of its history. In her Diary, she has recorded several acts of kindness shewn her by many Christian friends while at Bristol; repeated pleasing interviews with Mr. Wesley; and the close intimacy which she formed with Mrs. Elizabeth Johnson, a maiden lady, at whose house she for some time resided.

This pious female was descended from an ancient and noble family. Her great grandfather was son to Counsellor Johnson, who was appointed Master of the Rolls to King Charles the Second. The residence of her father was at Chippenham, Wiltshire. She was the youngest of four children, one son and three daughters, and was born in June, 1721. From her infancy she feared God, but did not obtain an experimental knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin, through faith in the atoning blood, until near the close of the year 1744. Soon after this, she united herself to Mr. Wesley's Society in Bristol, and was one of the first-fruits of the extraordinary work of God, the light of which was then just dawning on the world. For above half a century she continued a steady, pious, consistent, and active member, adorning in all things the gospel of God her Saviour. During the greatest part of this period, she resided with her eldest sister, Mrs. Mary Johnson, a lady of similar spirit, and they had one heart and one way. Like Lady Maxwell, her benevolence was bounded only by her abilities. In the earlier part of her religious life, she, also, with Lady M—, regretted her want of means to gratify the generous wishes of her heart; but, by the death of relatives, she received repeated accessions to her property; all of which she cheerfully devoted to the cause of God, and to the wants of the necessitous. In one instance, twelve hundred pounds came into her possession, purposely to be distributed

among the poor; and this labour of love was faithfully performed, and with delight and satisfaction, by her own hand. She died as she had lived, exulting through the blood of the cross. About three o'clock on the morning of her death, she endeavoured to repeat the apostle's triumphant exclamation, "I have fought"— but here her breath failed, and weakness forbid her finishing the blessed sentence, the import of which her heart experienced. About four, she cried out, "*Come—Lord, come—come,*" and a little after "*Lord,*" with which word she sunk into the arms of her Redeemer. "Thus," says her Biographer, "on the 18th of December, 1798, a few minutes before five in the morning, after near *fifty-five* years close walk with God, Elizabeth Johnson attained the summit of her wishes; the answer of her prayers; the end of her faith; the final salvation of her soul; and, as a ripe shock of corn, was gathered into the heavenly garner in the *seventy-eighth* year of her age. Her remains were interred on the 27th, in the family vault at Laycock, in Wiltshire." Many of the following letters will be found addressed to this eminent saint.

Having completed her work for the present at Bristol, Lady Maxwell again bent her course homeward. On her way, she visited her friend and correspondent, Mr. Mather, at Wakefield, and arrived in safety at Edinburgh, on the 8th of November. Several of the subsequent epistles refer to the above particulars, and will sufficiently

shew what was the state of her Ladyship's mind and heart, in the midst of these multifarious engagements. And it will be seen, that, while she was faithfully discharging the duties which devolved upon her in that part of the Lord's vineyard committed to her care, she was cheered and encouraged by hearing of the spread of the gospel, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in different parts of the world.

LETTER LVI.

TO THE REV. C. ATMORE.

January 5, 1792.

For the comfort of your own soul, Rev. Sir, and the good of others, I wish to give you a more accurate account of the Lord's work in different places, as communicated to me by two Christian friends in England, than I did yesterday. My information from Hull runs thus: "The work of the Lord is greatly deepened in many hearts in this place lately. Five of our friends within this last six weeks, are clearly brought into full liberty. They simply and freely testify, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Several are athirst for purity of heart, and I trust a cloud of witnesses will be raised up here, whose lives, and humble though open profession, will evince to all who know them, that they are redeemed from sin." This

for my friend at Hull. *Bolton*—"The Lord seems to be going out of his common way to alarm and convert the children of men. Here eight returned thanks for pardon one sabbath-day: and seventeen young women, belonging to the Sunday School, were justified very lately. Many more have recently been brought in; some by being alarmed by visions in the night, and others by seeing the distress of some who were crying for pardon."

Mr. P. Cox, at Brunswick, writes, "Great news from Zion. Never was there so great a work in America, no, nor in any part of England, according to all the accounts in Mr. Wesley's Journals, as is now in Brunswick and Sussex circuits. At many of our preaching places, we cannot meet the classes, on account of the cries of the distressed. Sometimes fifty in a day are truly converted to the living God. On the 26th and 27th of July, our quarterly meeting for Brunswick was held at Marlburgh Chapel, and on the 28th and 29th, for Sussex circuit, at Jones's Chapel. It was thought, at the least computation, that during these four days, there were between two and three hundred savingly brought to God. It is impossible for us to ascertain the numbers exactly; however, such a sight I never beheld before. The penitents lay in rows on the ground, crying for mercy at the hands of God; many of whom were the principal gentry of the country, and several of Dr. Cox's chief opposers, when he bore his testimony against the slave trade."

Mr. Dickens writes from New York. "Aug. 27, 1787. I have very extraordinary things to communicate. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in Virginia. It looks like the dawn of the millennium. I have received the most authentic intelligence that since our last Conference several hundreds have been converted in Brunswick and Sussex circuits; and about Brunswick seven thousand souls are under deep conviction. The work is also very extraordinary in some parts of North Carolina, especially at, and near Virginia, where the congregations on the Sabbath-day consist of many thousands, and many of the greatest persecutors are struck down as dead. Surely this is the arm of Omnipotence."

Some parts of this account were transmitted to us before, but they will bear a repetition. O that the recital of them might warm, by the blessing of the Most High, the many cold hearts to be found in our northern climes. Yet, surely, our God was with us also of a truth yesterday, and I feel him equally gracious to-day. Let us improve the favourable season, and wrestle for greater things. In a peculiar manner, I believe he waits to do us good at present. May you quickly prove and openly testify, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." I hope Mrs. Atmore also is athirst for this great blessing. I am, Rev. Sir, your faithful humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LVII.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

January 18, 1788.

Through the abounding goodness of my God, I am still constrained to testify of his loving-kindness to my soul. The penury of mortal language prevents my doing justice to the grand and delightful subject: eternity alone can unfold the wondrous tale! O what heights and depths of redeeming love have I experienced, since the commencement of 1787; and yet I seem to have but tasted of the cup of bliss. The pleasing, the delightful retrospect, affords ample matter for wonder, love, and praise. I have sometimes, lately, endeavoured to measure back by contemplation, the various steps whereby the Lord has led me, and caused his love to abound towards me, for these last twelve months; but my thoughts have often been recalled, and absorbed in present enjoyment. Shall I say with Kempis, "The Lord sees I am yet weak in love, therefore he visits me often." If I do, surely I must add, if this is a mark of weakness, let me never be without it. Solomon's inquiry, "Will God in very deed dwell with man on the earth?" I can from sweet experience quickly answer, he will, —he does; for I dwell in love, and in God, and God in me. What shall I say to these things? It is the Lord's doing, and is truly marvellous in my eyes. O may my life, together with my

pen, and lips, proclaim his goodness, and speak his praise.

His Spirit still witnesses to the work of sanctification; but I daily prove that I only stand by faith. If at any time a doubt passes through my mind, it is not permitted to rest there. The Lord has again recourse, I may say, to signs and wonders, to confirm my faith. Then succeeds a sweet sinking into God: yea, into the Godhead's "deepest sea;" and soon my soul breaks out, in strong desire, for all that God can give.

I see the *full assurance of hope*,* as something superior to what I now enjoy; and am led to press after it. You have walked over all this ground, I doubt not; and can therefore point out the *straight* road to a traveller, who wishes to get quickly on, and to carry many with her. I do feel liberty, and endeavour, when Christian prudence permits, to speak and write upon the delightful theme, that now engrosses my best thoughts; although a variety of perplexing business sets a seal upon a large proportion of my time. But Divine love will not be kept under; it will rise above every sorrow, every care, every fear, yea, every creature. It cannot rest short of God, its centre. O, how excellent a thing is love! May it fill your soul and mine.

My journey to Bristol is delayed till April, by the dilatory proceedings of the architect of the chapel at the Hot-wells: you will not regret this.

* See Note, vol. ii. p. 168.

I am in a measure delivered from slavish fear, else I should shrink from the trials I may expect there. God has made me as certain, as of my own existence, that he has placed me where I now stand: I therefore depend upon him, for wisdom, strength, &c. &c. I feel as a little child, in the business, perfectly unequal to the task; but I am aware it is the Divine appointment and blessing alone that can give power and success to any instrument.

I wish to hear that Mrs. Mather is quite well again. She must not leave us for a long time yet. O that the Lord would raise up many witnesses blessed with her experience. May your bow abide in full strength, and the success of your labours increase with your years. I wish I had rhetoric sufficient to persuade you to take up your pen in the defence and support of a doctrine that seems at present too much neglected. Do think of it, and oblige, Rev. Sir, your faithful humble servant in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LVIII.

TO THE REV. C. ATMORE, GLASGOW.

Coates, 11th March, 1788.

Because he who is rich in mercy still gives the continued grace, I can, Rev. Sir, answer your inquiry in the affirmative. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour." I have been, by the wise

appointment of unerring Wisdom, afflicted in body, more so than for some months, and still I am far from being well; hence I am much confined. In the former part of my illness, I lay, as it were, becalmed in the bosom of love; but, in the latter part of it, the adversary was permitted to try every grain of grace. I was sifted as wheat: it was truly an emptying time. Yet, *I stood*, because the everlasting arms were underneath me; and soon my God said, "It is enough." He rebuked the adversary, and the din of war ceased. I had peace in all my borders; yea, it flowed as a river. God the Father, and Son, came down as at the beginning, encircled me in the arms of redeeming love, and poured a flood of noon-day evidence into my soul for sanctification. Assist me to praise him who deals thus tenderly and bountifully with me.

Yesterday, my cup overflowed. I was called to see an old acquaintance, Lady J. M'Kensy: she was just upon the wing, ready to take her flight into the invisible world. In my way to town, O how exquisite was my enjoyment!—language fails to express it. Heaven seemed let down to earth. Jesus was intimately nigh, shining in all his mediatorial glory, with beams of sacred light. When I came to my friend, I found her in the full triumph of faith, exulting in her God. The curtain of mortality seemed drawn aside, and the glories of the eternal world were displayed. The terror of kings, and the king of terrors, was disarmed of all his terrors, and

changed into a messenger, not only of peace, but of joy. It was truly a memorable season; for a while we forgot almost that we were in the body. O, what has Jesus done for the sinful progeny of Adam! How far do the heights and depths of redeeming love exceed the grasp of our limited capacities! May we prove its utmost extent.

My soul springs forth in eager pursuit of what I have not yet attained. I do feel that God is

> "——the spring of all my joys,
> The life of my delights;
> The glory of my brightest days,
> And comfort of my nights."

Will you permit me to ask, Why are you so long, before you enter the promised land? You know the way: *all things are ready*. Let not the sweets of earthly comforts retard your progress. I should be glad if you could inform me in your next, that both Mrs. Atmore and yourself are the happy inhabitants of that good land. It is, indeed,

> "——Favoured with God's peculiar smile;
> With every blessing blest."

I feel for Dumfries:—hinderances strew all the way; but God *reigneth*. Dalkeith also wears a *sombre* appearance. I rejoice to think that the Lord can, and hath promised to make a way for his church even in the wilderness; and streams in the desert. But business of various kinds calls, and I must answer.

With wishes for your spiritual prosperity, and also Mrs. Atmore's, I am, Rev. Sir, Your faithful, humble servant, DARCY MAXWELL.

LETTER LIX.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

April 9, 1788.

Believing, Rev. Sir, that you desire the prosperity of my soul, I feel sweetly constrained, for my own profit as well as your satisfaction, to inform you, that through the tender mercy of him, whose compassion faileth not, my soul is comfortably alive to God: still tasting his good word, and feeling the powers of the world to come. I am kept sweetly under the influence of Divine truth, and favoured with many precious visits from on high; when the Deity deigns to converse with his creature, and to shine with peculiar brightness upon the work of sanctification in my soul. While thus

> "Lost in the high enjoyment of his love,
> What glorious mortal can my envy move?"

But this high and exquisite enjoyment, is not my *constant* allowance: *that* is rather a calm, silent, sweet sinking into God. Yet I feel but a babe in perfect love. However, there is much reason for thankfulness; the work, so far as I have experienced it, is *clear:* and the babe is daily panting for the *maturity* and *stability* of a father, and is much encouraged to press on, by the tender dealings of a God of love, who wonderfully bears with many weaknesses.

The veil, that covers unseen things from mortal eyes, grows more transparent. I get clearer

views of the eternal world; of the happiness of its blessed inhabitants. Yet, though thus highly favoured, I seem, in one sense, to *sink* daily in my own eyes; while, in another, I rise higher. I daily need to wash in the blood of Jesus; and prove it very strengthening and comfortable, frequently, by faith, to plunge, as it were, in that sacred fountain; and renew the dedication of myself, with all I have and am, or ever shall have, to my God. He accepts the sacrifice!—How great the condescension!

I believe nothing short of what the Lord has done for me, would have proved sufficient for the very difficult task he has assigned me. I have such a multiplicity of things and persons to deal with, and attend to, and daily new trials arise; so that often, all the strength of my body, with the whole powers of my mind, are called into exercise, and every grain of my grace is tried. I have to fight every inch of ground, not only without, but sometimes within, when the powers of darkness are permitted, for wise ends, to molest me. Then I feel driven up to a corner: all human help fails, and I prove, in a *peculiar manner*, that I stand by faith: and even in that way, only by the mighty exertion of Divine power in my behalf. *For the time*, faith seems stripped of all its fruits, and but for the *direct act*, whereby, in spite of men and devils, I keep my hold of Christ, I should utterly fail. But in general, these very trying seasons of inward distress are short: my God soon rebukes the adversary, and

brings me again into the wealthy place, and I dwell within the veil. How shall I sufficiently praise him for all his goodness! But how little do I know of it, and of that depth of love there is in all his dispensations towards me. The very narrow limits of my capacity keeps me blind to much of it *now*: but, when in eternity, if I should be permitted to look into the records of time, I shall know it better. What wisdom, what beauty, what goodness, shall I then discover, in all his dealings with me. I am lost in the thought, but must not pursue it, having no more time to write, and perhaps you as little to read.

I hope Mrs. M. is now well, and that both you and her are advancing sweetly in the heavenly road, and carrying many with you, who shall be for a crown of joy and rejoicing in the day of the Lord. I see one of the ancient pillars of the building has given way, though it has, of late years, sustained no great weight. I hope the fabric will not feel any remarkable shock by its fall. Could you not be persuaded to spend a season in the land of your nativity, for the good of its inhabitants? Wishing Mrs. M. and you, the fullest possession of every new covenant blessing,

I remain, Rev. Sir,

Your obliged, humble servant in Christ,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LX.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

June 27, 1788.

I should, perhaps, for my own sake, Rev. Sir, have sooner answered your last profitable letter, but I have now so many necessary and valuable claims upon my time, that I cannot do the things I would: however, I embrace a few leisure moments to ask after you and Mrs. M.; and to say, I still prove that "*God is love.*" In saying this, I say all. How much does this include?—More than words can express.

Upon a retrospect of the last twelve months, I find infinite cause for praise and thanksgiving. I *then* received the clear witness for sanctification; and since *then*, O what wonders of mercy has the Lord shown to me! Too many to recapitulate, however pleasing the recital would be. But I trust, a lively sense of them will never be erased from my grateful heart.

Since I last wrote you, I have had some remarkable discoveries of the love, power, and goodness of him, who delighteth in the prosperity of his children. The invisible world hath been brought very nigh, with its blessed inhabitants. There seemed but a step between me and eternal glory. My God and Saviour felt just at hand. O what hath Jesus purchased for his people! Even in this vale of tears, how great their enjoyment! What shall the full fruit

tion of God be, when death is swallowed up of life?

> "Say ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
> Angels, for ye enjoy it,"

and continually behold his face without a veil. This was a memorable season. I pray that it may produce gracious and permanent effects.

Since then I have had various trials, and numberless proofs of the power and love of God, in supporting me under, and carrying me through them: more especially lately in a very *capital one;* much more than sufficient to have entirely overset me: and yet, by the good hand of my God upon me, I have been so carried above it, as not to feel one murmuring, or even desponding thought. Surely "all things are possible to him that believeth." Assist me to praise him who deals so bountifully with me. And bear with me while I give you another instance of the astonishing goodness of the God whom we love.

On Wednesday last, I felt for some hours keen anguish of spirit, from a fear of having grieved the Holy Spirit. As a Christian, perhaps, you know the nature of this distress better than I can describe it; if so, you well know that it is severe. Thus fearing, and thus feeling, how was my soul filled with astonishment and love, when, joining in prayer with a Christian friend or two, *God the Father* came down in solemn majesty, banished all my fears, and scattered all my grief. He shone clear to the eye of faith, and has abode thus with me, *even me,* ever since. About three

minutes after this gracious visitation, the Lord Jesus drew nigh, as a distinct person, clearly manifesting himself as the second Person of the Holy Trinity. Prayers were then turned into praises! How grateful, how holy, how humble, ought I to be! I deeply feel my short-comings; but duty calls, and I must leave this delightful theme.

May you sink deeper than I have ever yet done into the ocean of redeeming love. It will yet be six weeks before I can get to England. With Christian remembrance to your valuable partner,

I remain, Rev. Sir,

Your obliged, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXI.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

Bristol, Sept. 8, 1788.

Rev. Sir,

Not having it in my power to see you in my way hither, I have it at heart to meet you and Mrs. M. in my return to Scotland. I see you are appointed for Wakefield: I will therefore endeavour, if the Lord will, to call on you there about four weeks hence. I cannot fix on any time *absolutely*, my hands are so full here; but I give you this hint, that you may, if you can, be at, or near Wakefield about that time.

A gracious God brought me here the 28th of last month. Being obliged to stop at Carlisle, and Workington, I was about seventeen days between Edinburgh and this place. In the course of which I had, through mercy, many rich displays of the wisdom, power, and goodness of a God of love; much delightful fellowship with the Sacred Three; and irresistible evidence of the work of sanctification. But I had also, at times, to grapple with the powers of darkness. I do not know that I ever formerly found the fiery darts of satan so keenly pointed. They seemed to pierce, even to the dividing asunder, the joints and marrow; but being strengthened to endure temptation, I quickly received the crown of present victory, and went on my way rejoicing.

I believe you can enter fully into the trying peculiarity of my situation in this place, without any explanation on my part. Indeed, I almost feared to enter into the cloud; but *He* who knows the human heart, knew I only wished to do *his will*, exclusive of every other consideration; and he has therefore mercifully disappointed my apprehensions. I have been privileged with much intercourse with Mr. Wesley in *public* and *private*, and with some precious souls in his connexion; and also with the most kind reception, and every possible assistance, from those with whom I was called to have much intercourse respecting the business I came to transact. They expressed a high respect for Mr. W. and behaved with Chris-

than cordiality, when they found him with me; which is matter of thankfulness.

I know you will be pleased to hear that the Lord is unspeakably gracious to my soul. Words can convey but a faint idea of what I enjoyed yesterday, both in public and private. God the Father came down in all the splendour of Deity; in solemn grandeur. The Majesty of Heaven condescended to fill the place in which I sat (a private room with a choice friend) with his presence, and my heart with his love, and has thus abode with me ever since. I felt constrained to speak to the Lady that was with me, and she also seemed full of God. About an hour after, when the name of Jesus was mentioned, he also condescended to visit me in a remarkable manner; shone gloriously forth as the second Person of the blessed Trinity. He did indeed appear as altogether lovely, and conquered all my shyness and taciturnity. How good is the Lord! If I add to all this, his great kindness in carrying me through many difficult matters—much perplexed business, which he only could teach me how to manage—how infinitely am I indebted! Do help me to praise him!

I will not now make any apology for such a large discourse on the chapter of self, having formerly explained myself on that head, I think you will not mistake me. With kind remembrance to Mrs. M. I remain, Rev. Sir,

Your obliged servant in the Lord,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXII.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

October, 1768.

I remember with satisfaction, Rev. Sir, the short interview I had with you and Mrs. M. at Wakefield. It was refreshing and animating. There is a peculiarity in my outward situation, and also in part of my experience, into which not many seem fitted to enter. On this account, I do not receive much benefit from the generality even of the Methodists. Indeed I do not find liberty to attempt an explanation to many of them. You are one, of the very few, who seem to understand me throughly as to *place, experience, views*, &c. Therefore the Lord, through this medium, often conveys to me comfort, strength, instruction, &c. for which I feel thankful. Could I repay you in kind, I would quickly extinguish the debt.

By the good hand of my God upon me, I arrived safely at home, though not till the eighth, just in time to partake of the gospel feast; which proved indeed a feast of love, a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. With much sacred delight, and strong grateful sensations, I devoted afresh my spared life to his honour and glory, who first gave it me, and who has ever since kindly preserved it.

Words fail to inform you, how much of his goodness my God has made to pass before me,

since I left Bristol. I still feel an amazing poverty in human language, when I would speak of the deep things of God. This, I suppose, will always be the case. However, suffice it to say, on the road, the Sacred Three compassed me about: I felt surrounded with the Divine presence: my communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was truly delightful. No *extatic joy*, but a Divine *serenity;* a heaven of silent love; a *sinking into* God. This last expression I am peculiarly partial to, because, to my own apprehension at least, it conveys such a literal idea of the enjoyment I experience on these peculiarly happy seasons. Thus wonderfully aided, I passed equally on, through things painful and pleasant. By Divine permission, with respect to outward things, the former prevailed at different places. I had some remarkably animating and refreshing intercourse with Christians; more especially at Leeds, Rippon, Darlington, and Alnwick. My mouth was wonderfully opened to declare what God had done for my soul; and on every such occasion, I received a testimony from on high, yea the most unequivocal evidence, that the efforts I made were peculiarly acceptable to him, for whose sake they were made.

Since I came home, though a very large proportion of my time has been necessarily filled up with business, I have been highly favoured with the presence of the ever-blessed Trinity; with sweet foretastes of future glory; and Mount Pisgah views of the heavenly Canaan: so that I

hesitate not to say, the Lord is deepening his work in my soul.

I do feel I stand in God, and cannot be confined to one party. My soul feels too much enlarged to admit of any exclusive charter. I consider real Christians, of every denomination, as a part of the great family of God; as such, I would do them all the good I can, and take all the profit from them they can give me. Perhaps, this extensive, unfettered view, is necessary, for the situation in which I am placed. But do not mistake me. I am at no loss *where* to rest the *preference:* there I am *perfectly decided.* My *experience* as well as *judgement* secures this. It is not necessary to say, I hope, I am quite safe in writing thus freely to you.

Were I not almost ashamed of having said so much on the chapter of self, I should add, I have, of late, experienced uncommon emptying seasons. These began some time before I left Bristol, and afterwards increased. I felt quite broken down before the Lord. Ashamed and confounded beyond expression, at the poor, wretched manner, in which I had conducted the work at Bristol. I did, indeed, sink into the dust before the face of Jehovah, and lay very low at his feet, imploring pardon, (without one grain of condemnation, in the common acceptation of the word,) because I had come so sadly short in what, at his command, I had attempted. Soon after, I received an increase. O, how good is our God!

I shall be pleased to hear that Mrs. M. continues better, and that the work of God prospers in your hands, and soul. The prayers of both will be esteemed a privilege by, Rev. Sir, your obliged, humble servant in Christ,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXIII.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

November 2, 1788.

"Gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity," for such wise ends, and salutary purposes, as fully justify the Divine procedure, and richly repay the sufferer. I hope Mr. M.'s happy experience bears testimony to this truth. I shall be glad to hear that he is restored to former health and usefulness, and that his path of *duty* is so clearly marked, as to supersede the necessity of listening to any one for direction. I believe the soul that walks closely with God, will in most, if not in every case, have the line drawn for him by unerring Wisdom. Attending continually to an indwelling God, we hear the small, still voice, saying,—"This is the way, walk ye in it."

I now begin to believe, that the Lord's very gracious dealings with me are intended for higher purposes than merely the comfort of my own soul; and, therefore, do more frequently, and

explicitly than ever, endeavour to tell those that fear God, what he has done for me; if, peradventure, the simple recital may be in the smallest degree profitable to them; though herein, satan withstands me greatly. Yet upon every proper occasion, I endeavour, in weakness, to offer it up as a sacrifice to my God (with a single eye to his glory,) upon that altar which alone can sanctify the gift. I feel more than ever called to wrestle in mighty prayer for the prosperity of Zion; more especially for some particular souls: and this morning, I think I obtained *faith* for *one*, together with the *strongest hopes* for many, who all so pressed upon me, so crowded before me, while in secret before the Lord, that a necessity was laid upon me by the Hearer of prayer himself, to be importunate for them: but for *all, one blessing only* was in view,—entire sanctification; or what we sometimes call *Christian perfection*.

This important doctrine of our holy religion, more especially as it relates to experience, now almost wholly occupies my mind; at least, all the time I can spare from business, &c. &c. and I really think the Lord has prepared a people here for entering the good land. O that he would bring them in! Assist them by your prayers. The injurious bar of unbelief prevents their taking immediate possession, not seeing clearly it is by simple faith alone.

How shall I sufficiently praise the Lord that I am still a happy inhabitant of that delightful land? Still struggling to scale the mount of

holiest love, I have gained some steps, but feel restless to reach the summit. My God is to me as a place of broad rivers, wide and deep. I rest in him; I dwell in him. Sinking into him, I lose myself; and prove a life of fellowship with Deity so divinely sweet, I would not relinquish it for a thousand worlds. It is, indeed, a narrow path; but love levels every mountain—makes all easy.

"O Love Divine, how sweet thou art!"

When I look back, I rejoice to see what I am saved from: when I look forward, it is all a pure expanse of unbounded love. Surely the heaven of heavens is love.

May you, more than ever, find this Divine principle overflowing your soul; sweetening every bitter cup; making every burthen light. But I am called away, and must conclude by saying, I would hope your remaining years will be peculiarly devoted to the interests of *Christian perfection*; promoting it by every possible means; and may the Lord succeed your every attempt, prays, Rev. Sir, your obliged, humble servant in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

1789.

Lady Maxwell's multifarious engagements—Diary continued—She again visits Bristol—meets with many perplexities respecting Hope Chapel.

Lady Maxwell's engagements during this year were so numerous and important, that she had but little leisure left for friendly correspondence. The care of many of the churches now devolved upon her; and the constant attention which these demanded, nearly absorbed the whole of her time. To one of her friends, she thus apologizes for long silence. "I have often wished, and intended to write you, but have been prevented. Though the pen is necessarily, and almost constantly in my hand, even to the injury of my health, I can seldom enjoy the privilege of writing to a Christian friend. My peculiar situation deprives me of many privileges. How, then, can I sufficiently adore the goodness, and admire the power, that, while thus situated, keeps my soul alive to Divine things." But though she was thus obliged to remit all avoidable correspondence, she continued her diary nearly with

as much frequency and fulness as ever. To this, therefore, we shall, for this year, again have recourse. And surely, it must be encouraging to every faithful and laborious servant of Jesus, to observe in the experience of this eminent saint, such a remarkable accomplishment of that precious promise: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

January 25. Still I have cause to sing of mercy. My God is still gracious in secret and public, opens my mouth in his cause, and causes my pen to move swiftly upon the delightful theme. He enables me to devise liberal things for my fellow-creatures, and draws out my soul to the stranger, the ignorant, and the poor; and enables me to go on my way rejoicing. The trials which he permits, he supports me under, and delivers me from; frequently disappointing my fears. But I feel ashamed I do not make greater progress; that my love is so cold; that I come so continually short. Yet my God bears with me, in the most tender manner. O the height and depth of redeeming love! Still the Bible is a source of uncommon comfort and profit to me; and still I have sweet times of refreshing in secret prayer.

February 7. Innumerable opportunities are now given me, for promoting the temporal and spiritual good of my fellow-creatures. I am not permitted to reason, and thereby weaken

my own hands, by considering how inadequate the instrument, to the arduous task of producing permanent good. *Duty* is mine, *events* are the Lord's. Still, I walk in the light of a luminous faith for sanctification: though in a much lower degree than many highly favoured ones; but I am sweetly invited daily to come up higher.

—— 28. Had a sweet, though short, visit from on high this day; a precious touch of the love of Jesus. Hearing from the pulpit yesterday of the too common evil of the Christian falling from his first love, I was led to examine my own experience on this point; and after a review of the years which have elapsed since I first knew the pardoning love of God, I find, if my heart does not deceive me, reason to conclude, I have not lost my first love: yet have much cause to lament, that I have not made greater progress, in the Christian faith; and also, to admire the long-suffering patience of a gracious God, and his tender dealings with me. O for a heart and life to praise him as I would and ought.

April 11. I feel ashamed, that though time passes quickly away, I do little to the purpose in the course of it. I feel at times deeply humbled on this account; even when the Lord is gracious. O my God, strengthen my hands herein; make me as active, and as zealous, and as useful, as humanity and my particular situation will admit. I would fain crowd as much work as possible into my little span of life. Lord, let

not the ghost of murdered or wasted time haunt me on a death bed.

—— 15. Much with others; might have been more spiritual in my conversation. Had many temporal things to mention; but, though the end was good, I erred in the time spent in them. In general, I find it best to carry all my matters to a throne of grace, and to obtain direction from the Source of Wisdom: yet, I must confess, the Lord often teaches me through the medium of the creature. I cannot, therefore, condemn the measure, but only wish to have the line drawn for me, by him with whom is the residue of the Spirit. I felt humbled for my mistakes and short-comings; yet the Lord was good, and shewed me the more excellent way. O that henceforward I may walk in it, and always find rest to my soul.

May 20. O what cause to praise redeeming mercy. My communion with God the Father, and Son, has been in a very peculiar manner, inexpressibly delightful. I have been strengthened by it, both in body and mind; and carried through much trying and perplexed business with ease. When the enemy would have poured in, his temptation found no place in me: in the same moment, I found myself lifted up, God himself was at my right hand, and poured his love into my soul. How unworthy of all this love; I would lie low before my God. I feel his will very precious, and his word a source of much profit, strength, and comfort to my mind.

June 7. Since last date I have been struggling

through various trials. The daily exertion of Divine power keeps me standing. All my victories are obtained through that strength, and leave me conscious of my own weakness, and under great obligations to redeeming love: with much desire to ascribe all the glory where alone it is due. This morning, in my way to the house of God, I had some delightful views of, and sweet meditations upon, the great privilege of having God as my Father; and went with an intention of renewing my engagements to be the Lord's at his own table. When there, was unexpectedly taken ill, and much tempted. I asked for leave to stay till I had communicated, which was granted. At the table, the Lord was unspeakably gracious. I saw his fulness; I felt it: I sunk sweetly into him. Father and Son felt very sensibly nigh: it was a precious season.

—— 28. Toiled all day, but caught little till the evening. I then got a view of the fulness of God, and felt sinking into it. I long for deeper impressions of Divine things. I would be more solemn; every moment pierced with a sense of the Divine presence. I would be filled with the *full assurance of hope unto the end.** I do

* "I believe a few, but very few Christians, have an assurance from God of everlasting salvation; and that is the thing which the apostle terms, *the plerophory, or full assurance of hope.*

I believe more have such an assurance of being *now* in the favour of God, as excludes all doubt and fear. And this, if I do not mistake, the apostle means by *the plerophory, or full assurance of faith.*"

Wesley's Works, Vol. xiii. *p.* 127.

most things too quickly; speaking, thinking, praying, reading. The Lord, in tender compassion, shews me the most excellent way in all things, but I learn slowly, and have reason to admire his patience. O for a heart to praise him more.

July 3. This day, also, has proved a good time, though confined to bed. In the evening, my cup overflowed, and I was constrained to tell those, who desire to love the Lord, what he had done, and was doing for my soul. How unwearied his kindness! How numberless my obligations! I am confounded, when I think of my unworthiness; of my short-comings; and how little love I have to this gracious God, after all he has done. But the more I meditate upon these humiliating circumstances, the more he increases his kindness to me. Eternity alone can unfold the wondrous tale. It is more than mortal language can express, or human thought conceive. But, O, eternity will in some measure [illegible] capacities for glorifying and enjoying this Source of bliss.

—— 10. Much business of various kinds has fallen to be done these days past. I am a wonder to myself. Unable to do any thing of myself to purpose, yet called do to much. I trust all is of God, who guides my pen, my tongue, my heart. As one proof of this, he keeps my mind above all, and with himself; entirely dependent upon himself. O, what oil to the wheels of the soul do I find divine love. Without this, I should

indeed drive heavily on; if I did not stop altogether. I have had many opportunities for promoting the spiritual interests of others lately; and my soul has panted with generous desires to embrace them all, and many more. Real religion enlarges the heart in good-will to all; here is no monopoly, no exclusive charter, wished for in this business. Have felt to-day rather suspicious that I am not, at present, in my place, respecting the management of part of the affairs committed to me, which lies at a great distance. Surely the Lord will direct a soul he has made so desirous to do his will in all things.

——24. My God rejoiceth over me to do me good from day to day. In secret prayer, this morning, Jesus drew delightfully nigh. He is my soul's bright morning star; he carries me through every difficulty. Looking to him, mountains melt down to mole-hills, and rough places are made smooth.

"O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine."

The cloud now seems decidedly to point to the South; and my mind feels more reconciled to the various trials of a long journey. The will of my God is precious, whatever aspect it wears. I am *his*, and would go, or stay, or suffer what he appoints."

Being fully satisfied that the finger of Providence again pointed to Bristol, Lady Maxwell left Edinburgh on the 17th of August. She ar-

veiled by short stages, and at every place where she rested, endeavoured, as usual, to promote the cause of religion. She arrived at Noble House the first night, "worn out by excessive fatigue before leaving home; but here a sphere of usefulness soon presented itself," and this animated and quickened her "languid powers." The next day she reached Moffat: "Many opportunities offered on the road, and were thankfully embraced;" but in this town, the "prospect of good was dark and discouraging." Passing through Penrith and Shap, she reached Burton on Saturday night the 21st. The next day she wrote: "Was confined to bed all the morning, but had a precious time. My mouth was opened to speak of, and for the Lord; and I was favoured with many opportunities to act for him." She has not recorded the course of her journeying the following week; but on Friday the 28th, we find her at Wolverhampton, where she made the following entry in her Diary:—"Since my last date at Burton, I have gone over much ground, and at every place endeavoured to bear my testimony, in a small degree, for Jesus. Except at particular times, my joy has not been so great. I have been kept in peace; my evidences wonderfully clear for sanctification; so as to surprise myself, and to stimulate me to do all I could for that God who does so much for me. When thus employed, I am in my element, though satan strongly opposes. This day, a piercing consciousness of my short comings and

great unworthiness, has humbled and broken me down before God. I perceive such a want of wisdom, judgement, and indeed every thing which might lead to self-applause, or to a trusting in any thing short of God himself, for direction in every thought, word, and action; as to make me stand astonished that he should bear with me. O what a bottomless abyss is redeeming love. For hours, while under this humbling exercise of mind, God the Father and Son drew sweetly nigh, and melted down my heart into a very tender frame, and drew out my soul in strong desires for more love, more heavenly wisdom, and great increase of Divine life."

On the second of September, her Ladyship arrived at Bristol, under a lively sense of the Divine goodness. The next day she wrote; "Through much mercy, came here last night, brought through many fears, dangers, and trials. Words fail to say how gracious the Lord has been to me. How he strengthens my trust in him, my expectations from him, and my confidence in what he has wrought in me, with respect to sanctification. He comforts me much in reference to his work in this place; so that I do expect he will appear in my behalf, and carry me through every difficulty."

Lady M— continued in Bristol until the 20th of October. She had much perplexing and harrassing business, which kept her constantly employed; but was also favoured with much Divine support. Many things, tending to obstruct the

work in which she was engaged, were happily removed, and an increase of pecuniary aid was afforded. The following extract, written on her arrival at home, affords further light on the objects of this journey. "Left Bristol Hot Wells on the 20th of October. I have much cause to bless the Lord for his goodness to me while there, and for his remarkable interpositions in behalf of his work at the Wells: particularly in inclining the heart of the heir-at-law to do all I asked, and in the way I proposed. Without this, I could not have gone on. The Lord was with me of a truth; melted down mountains of difficulty, and brought wonderful things to pass. This was agreeable to the hopes he had given me before I left home. He is a faithful God: with truth I may set my seal to this. After travelling upwards of four hundred miles, with my own horses, through much bad road, and sometimes under heavy rains and high winds, he brought me in health and peace to my own habitation on the 7th of November. On the road home, he gave me many opportunities for promoting the spiritual and temporal interests of my fellow-creatures, and many comfortable and profitable interviews with Christians. May an effectual blessing attend both."

The following extracts will conduct to the close of this year.

"December 17. My comfort was sensibly increased this morning, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit clear, more especially after mid-day,

my fellowship with the Sacred Three was most delightful. I was favoured with another clear view of the Holy Trinity; and from the abundance of my heart, my mouth spoke to those about me of the witness of Divine love, and the support it afforded in the day of trouble. But, O Lord, do thou enlarge my spiritual borders, and enable me to glorify thee. Fill me with holy humble love. Let love command my heart, and fully govern my life; let love be the spring and rule of action in my soul; then shall I, more than ever, put on bowels of compassion and tenderness to all.

——25. Devoted myself, as usual, upon this day, *to him*, whose I am, and whom I wish to serve. I went with sweet desire and expectation to his house to thank him for his unspeakable gifts; but my vast desires were not fully satisfied. Returned again in the evening, but still I looked for more than I received. Yet I am sensible, from unequivocal evidence, that the work of grace is advancing in my soul. O my God, let every nerve be on the stretch for thee. May Jesus be all the world to me, and all my soul be love. How great the mystery of godliness; "Christ manifest in the flesh." The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, becoming a child clothed with humanity! The short line of human reason cannot sound this bottomless abyss of mercy; it is too deep for us. Nor does God mean that we should lose our plummet in the depths of Deity; but that we should believe, love, and obey, through his Almighty power.

1790.

Correspondence resumed with Mr. Mather, Mrs. Johnson, and Miss Ritchie.—Lady M— visits Carlisle, Wigton, and Workington.

We shall now again recur to Lady Maxwell's correspondence. Though her Diary enters into greater detail relative to her religious experience, and is much more circumstantial, yet the following letters substantially embrace what she has there recorded; while at the same time, they glance at other interesting particulars which are not elsewhere noticed. There is, besides, a fascinating charm in an epistolary communication of sentiment and feeling, which it is believed will be more interesting to the generality of readers.

LETTER LXIII.

TO THE REV. ALEX. MATHER.

January 16, 1790.

Mr. Mather's letter presents an agreeable picture, of a mind tenderly sensible to a recent loss; yet, *through grace*, rising superior to them

natural feelings, and thereby preserved from excessive sorrow: this alone can lead us to that happy medium which God allows; we are unable of ourselves to draw the line. Nature is prone to excess; and the bounderies between right and wrong, like those of light and shade, are separated by very narrow, and almost imperceptible limits. There is certainly nothing which proves such an effectual preservative, against whatever would either more immediately, or remotely, tend to hurt the soul; as having God the object of our supreme affection, reigning without a rival in the heart. The magnetic virtue of this powerful attractive, draws all the affectionate powers of the soul to one point; and permanently fixes them upon their Divine centre. Similar to the effects of a convex lens, which, when drawn to its proper focus, collects the scattered rays of the sun, which, while diffused, produces little heat; but when thus concentrated, kindles a fire that consumes whatever comes in its way. Who would not wish to feel the purifying force of this sacred flame, burning up all their dross.

Though not yet an entire convert to the doctrine of your last, upon the chapter of *self*, I so far allow of what you have said, that I may with impunity, let you know a few particulars. I have had lately an uncommonly severe conflict with the combined powers of darkness; who, for wise ends, have been permitted to try me to the uttermost. I found all the which grace I had hitherto received would have been by far too little to bring

me off victorious, without a remarkable interposition of Him, who is stronger than man, devils, and sin. While wrestling, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places, I endeavoured to assert my privileges; and, by simple faith, to hold fast what had been freely bestowed, sensibly received, and long and comfortably enjoyed. A temporary cessation of arms seemed to take place; but the instant this exercise was intermitted, my foes renewed their attack with redoubled fury, and roared upon me as so many bulls of Bashan. This, more than ever, convinced me of the sterling value of faith; as being the only successful weapon with which to fight the battles of the Lord. But lest I be tedious, by attempting to detail the various circumstances of this serious engagement; suffice it to say, after many hours of distress, in the course of which, I was not suffered to yield an hair's breadth to my enemies, I obtained a final victory. A heavenly calm succeeded, and I had peace in all my borders. For this I was very thankful, and at the time did not look for more; but he, who is rich in mercy, had prepared greater things: *Jehovah* himself came down, in solemn majesty. My inmost soul felt pierced with a deep sense of his presence; while he permitted me to enjoy deep communion with himself. Here was indeed a "heaven of love, and all that sacred awe that dares not move." A few minutes enjoyment of such an agreeable interview, would have been a

great blessing; but what praise is due to him who has continued it till now, which is five days. Still the Most High thus abides with me. Be astonished, O heavens! The day after this extraordinary visit, being the Lord's-day, I had an opportunity of partaking of the solemn ordinance of the supper. Here my allowance was much larger. While at the sacred table, I felt not only joined in spirit to the general assembly of the first-born; but, by faith, *as one of them*, Heaven appeared open, to give a view of the blessed inhabitants: and, for some minutes, the music of the glorious place seemed to sound in my ears: immediately after, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost sensibly encamped about me. I felt surrounded with Deity, in all its plenitude of love and power —lost in wonder, love, and praise:—swallowed up in the inexpressible enjoyment of the beatific vision. How good is God! Assist me to praise him, and to gain every possible advantage by this recent instance of his love: the account of which, for want of time, and from many interruptions, is very defective; but the mantle of love must cover every inaccuracy.

May you feel your every want fully supplied by God. Enjoying him, what finite good can make an addition. As a professional gentleman, I hear your son meets with approbation and success:—may he shine in a nobler science—be constrained to receive the truth, not merely as a system of doctrines; but as a vital, energetic principle, that shall change his heart, renew his mind, and

produce a beautiful uniformity of conduct, and respectability of character. So that at last, he may receive the Divine plaudit, "Well done."

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXIV.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

May 26, 1790.

I take the opportunity of a frank, to inquire after the welfare of my sister in Jesus; and how the work of the Lord prospers in her hands? Also to inform her, that he is getting himself glory here, in the hearts of both saints and sinners; and, this even through the feeble instrumentality of the unworthy individual that now communicates the pleasing intelligence.

For some time, I have met a few young women on the Lord's-day, who appeared athirst for *full* salvation. From time to time, I simply told them what the Lord had done for my own soul; and what he was willing to do for them. I found them daily laid upon my mind in prayer; and the last time I met them, while pleading that the Lord would raise them up, as witnesses of his power to save to the uttermost, one was set at full liberty: and I expect, at next opportunity, to find that others have been enabled to follow her example. Help me to praise a gracious God for his goodness. My heart is filled with gratitude.

He has also given me to see the fruit of my

affectionate advice, with respect to two of our preachers, who are both athirst for perfect love. Help them by your prayers. He is wonderfully and delightfully present in the little class which the preachers meet in my house, and opens my mouth to speak explicitly before them, of the work he has wrought in my own soul. This they receive with gladness, and the Lord bears testimony to the truth in their hearts, and gives me a present reward as a proof of his approbation. O let us bless him, who is working so wonderfully.

I have a pleasing hope of this being the beginning of great things. The work goes on sweetly and sensibly in my own soul. I have felt such a delightful sinking into Jehovah, for many weeks, as language fails to express: a losing myself in the depths of Deity. As trials of various kinds increase, so does the goodness of my God: I feel his loving eye continually upon me. He has kindled such a flame of Divine love in my soul, as I hope will never be extinguished; but burn brighter and brighter, till it mingle with the blaze of eternal day. I think the hour appointed for our meeting at a throne of grace, has been blessed to both. May God increase us, and fill with all his communicable fulness.

I believe Mr. J—n will leave the Wells about the end of May, having had a call to succeed Mr. T— at B—. Mrs. P— also thinks of moving. Miss P— has taken offence. Mr. B—, the ostensible manager, takes no active part, from weak

spirits and nerves. All these things seem against me, but the work is the Lord's. Do help me by your prayers, to see wherefore he contends, and that he would shew me his will, and enable me to follow it.

Unless the light shines so clear, as to make another journey decidedly plain, I cannot think of going there this summer.

Hoping to hear good accounts from you soon, and wishing you a swift progress in the heavenly road, I am, dear Mrs. Johnson's fellow-pilgrim and well-wisher in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXV.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

May 26, 1790.

REV. SIR,

I have perused your valuable manuscript with much satisfaction and profit. While I read it, the Lord shone upon my heart, and upon your words, and witnessed to the truth of all you have advanced, in support of Christian perfection. I bless my God, for inclining and enabling you so thoroughly to investigate this important doctrine, which has been so long neglected. You have dug deep, cleared away much rubbish, and raised a beautiful superstructure upon a solid basis: and by so doing, rendered an essential service to the church of Christ.

The crude, undigested ideas, that many well-meaning people form of this important branch of the believer's privilege, not only necessarily lead to mistakes in practice, but make it an object of contempt and derision. This will not, I trust, be the case in future, as you have happily rescued it from the malice of enemies, and the mistakes of friends; and set it forth in its own native beauty. And thus viewed, what a lovely truth it is! How worthy of its Divine Original! How ornamental to humanity! May the Almighty fiat go forth respecting it, then many shall not only see and admire, but also happily enjoy the blessing of *perfect love*. Your sharp eye, however, will perceive that a few corrections will be necessary, before the manuscript is sent to the press. You will forgive this freedom; strictures do not become a female pen.

I thank Mr. M— for his addition to the letter I received from Dundee, which was viewed through the medium he wished; Mr. —— may grieve, but cannot offend. I believe the Lord will lead me into *all his* will concerning me. Here I rest; I cannot walk by the light of another. But I forbear; Mr. M— understands me thoroughly, as to the point in hand.

I would now touch upon a more pleasing theme; the goodness of God to my own soul. But here, I must still complain of the poverty of mortal language, which can convey but an imperfect idea of the deep things of God. I have much reason to be thankful that my fellowship

is still with the Father and Son. I do experience the accomplishment of that precious promise, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Though I can lay claim to a very small degree of purity; yet, in virtue of it, I clearly perceive the Triune God: a sense of Deity rests upon my soul: I enjoy such a sweet sinking into Jehovah, as I can by no means express; indeed it beggars all description, and has almost every moment since I last wrote you at Wakefield. I then mentioned a most remarkable manifestation I had been favoured with, more particularly from God the Father, attended with that inexpressible nearness, or, speaking more properly, a losing of myself in the depths of Deity: and still it continues. Amazing goodness! This sweet sinking into God so humbles the soul, and at the same time, so exalts and aggrandizes it, as is pleasing and profitable to experience. I am kept alive to my weakness and ignorance, but not discouraged; because, on every application to my God, I am raised above them, when any exertion is necessary on my part. On this account, I refuse no work assigned me, however unequal to the task. And if at any time I make my way through what is difficult and perplexing, I clearly see to whom the glory is due, and feel much disposed to give it.

But I must have done; time would fail to enumerate all the instances of the tender, gracious dealings of my God. To you I write more fully on this subject than almost to any other, because

I think you clearly understand me. It is a simple narration of facts; much might be added, but I forbear. My hands have been sensibly strengthened by your manuscript. Your views and mine correspond entirely with respect to perfect love. Wishing you a still fuller enjoyment of every gospel promise, I remain, Rev. Sir, your humble servant, and well-wisher in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXVI.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

July 30, 1790.

It was kind in dear Miss Ritchie to write me; more especially as, I believe, I owed her a letter. Indeed I have very little time left me for the pleasing and profitable employment of corresponding with Christians. But as this is by the appointment of him, who overruleth all things for his own glory, and eventually for his people's good, I wish to offer it up as a sacrifice to him, whose I am, and whom in all things I wish to serve.

Language is too faint to express what he has done for my soul since I wrote last to Miss R. I feel lost in wonder, love, and praise!—More especially since January last, my soul has centered in God in a very peculiar manner. I have sunk into Jehovah as a drop into the ocean; and by the constant exertion of Omnipotent Power, *here* I abide; though daily occupied by a

multiplicity of business, and public engagements. I prove continually that the magnetic virtue of Divine love is superior to every other attraction, and sufficient to bear up both mind and body under the weight of constant and diversified employment. How good, how gracious, how powerful, is our God.

Yet, though he has of late enlarged my capacity of receiving, and sensibly increased my little stock, I am deeply conscious that what I *now* possess, is but as a drop in the bucket, compared to that immensity from whence it flows; or even to what he is willing to bestow. I am sweetly invited to come up higher, and partake more largely: and it is a comfortable thought, if we continue simply "to follow on to know the Lord," his going forth shall still be before us as light, and his brightness as a lamp that burneth. On some occasions I am favoured with astonishing views of the fulness of God, and of his willingness to impart of it: this so fires my soul, so expands my heart, that I would grasp Infinity itself. But here, I am greatly withstood by the combined powers of darkness, who unite to drive me back, and attempt to fill my mind with horror; while the nearness of Deity—the majestic grandeur of Jehovah—the heaven of sacred awe, that fills the place, almost overpowers the human frame. But, he who knows whereof we are made, and how little we can bear of these glorious displays of Divine power and love while in the body, or of the strong assaults of the satanic legion; quickly

interposes—arrests the powers of darkness—veils in a measure, the heavenly glory, and pours the soul-composing medicine of redeeming love into the heart. I look forward to that day, when all my ransomed powers shall be so formed, as easily to bear the dazzling brightness of unveiled Deity. Hail, auspicious morn! Indeed it is very desirable to make the most of our present fleeting moments.

I seem to derive the greatest advantage from a *lively faith* in *constant exercise*. This secures what I already possess, and increases the little stock. In secret prayer and meditation I obtain enlarged views of the full salvation of God; and what is thus discovered, faith goes out after, and according to its strength are its returns. I prize much the Divine teachings: with eager attention I listen to the heavenly lessons, and pant to reduce them to practice. I daily feel the need of the precious blood of sprinkling, dwell continually under its influence, and most sensibly prove its sovereign efficacy. It is by *momentary faith in this alone*, that I am *saved from sin*. Dear Miss R. must be satisfied with a small abstract, as I have not time to enlarge. When she can conveniently write, I shall always be pleased to hear from her; and when I can spare a few minutes, will, for my own advantage, make a return.

There is no remarkable revival amongst us here: particular souls are blessed. I frequently meet a few young women, who are alive. I hope

some have entered the promised land, and others are struggling in. A *full salvation* has this last year been more insisted on in public, which has answered valuable purposes. Assist us with your prayers, that "a little one may become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation."

D. Maxwell.*

LETTER LXVII.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

Rev. Sir, *Sept.* 11, 1790.

Your letter, returned from Edinburgh, found me at Carlisle, where I had gone upon business.

* In the month of August, Lady Maxwell again visited a few of the Chapels under her care in England. On her return, she wrote as follows in her Diary:—

"September 2d. I set out for Carlisle, Wigton, and Workington, on Lady H.'s business, on the 18th of August, and returned here (Coates) yesterday. In the course of these fourteen days, the Lord has been eminently with me. He preserved man and beast, and gave me my heart's desire respecting the business I went about. He also gave me numberless opportunities of attempting the temporal and spiritual good of others, with power to use them; and much, very much, fellowship with the Father and the Son. In general, I enjoyed the witness of sanctification, and often a plenitude of the Divine presence. Truly my God was good to me. He strengthened for unusual exertions in his cause; and when tempted and tried, he succoured and comforted me: more especially at one time, when Deity in clouds condescended to visit me, and turned my heaviness to joy unspeakable, and put a song of praise in my mouth. I am unable to tell of all the kindness and tenderness my God hath shewed me since I left home. O that I may be faithful and humble!"

I am sorry to see by it that you are still very poorly. Our God knows "what best for each will prove:" and we are warranted to believe that all his dispensations towards his people, whether joyous or grievous, are conducted upon this principle. I hope he will soon restore you to health, and continue your extensive sphere of usefulness to a late period. It is very desirable to fill up life with action, but it is possible to *over do*; though I believe the case seldom occurs. Indeed I should not be surprised if it often did. When God is the object of supreme affection, who can *love* too much, or *do* too much. Divine love cannot be bounded by the frigid laws of cool reasoning, however just.

I hope the state of your health will admit of the free use of your pen, in the weeks of your retirement and relaxation, whereby you may essentially serve the best interests of your fellow-creatures; and this will the more easily reconcile your active spirit to a narrow circle.

I must now give you a few words upon the chapter of *self*, as I know you will expect it, and also thoroughly understand me in so doing. I would preface it by saying, as Mr. Cole carried my *last*, he must have forgot to deliver it: but I would add, it was, perhaps, as well he did; as I suppose every minute of your time during Conference, was fully occupied. My God still condescends to shew the sweetest complacency. Herein I discern the fulness of that *satisfaction*, which the blood of Christ hath made for me. It is *full* reconciliation. O what praise is due to

him! In the course of my last excursion, my God made much of his goodness to pass before me; gave me my heart's desire respecting the business that carried me from home; and much, very much, delightful fellowship with heaven: often a plenitude of the Divine presence; and one very remarkable manifestation of the Holy Trinity. A few days after, when tempted and tried, Jehovah came down in solemn grandeur; so surrounded me, so penetrated my inmost soul with a sense of the presence of Deity, and so filled me with a heaven of silent love, as baffles all expression. This glorious interview, you may believe, soon scattered all my foes, and left me lost in wonder, love, and praise! and, perhaps, a little strengthened for a few exertions in the best of causes. I find it matter of thankfulness, that this continued intercourse with Divinity, does not make *humanity* a *cross* to me; and that though my God keeps me united to *himself*, yet he lets me down, and enables me willingly to perform the necessary duties of life, and often affords as much enjoyment when so employed, as when in secret with himself. Hitherto, (to his praise I would speak it) he has given me to see what things are necessary, what things are lawful, what things are expedient, and what are not. And I would venture to say, he has given me a small measure of light into what is, and is not, consistent with that state of gospel liberty, of which he has condescended to let me taste. It is but a taste; and what I chiefly want is a deeper entrance into the holiest. My way is plain;—the door is

open—a glorious field is before me. My God invites me forward; but I do not seem yet to have faith sufficient to receive all that is offered. Let me have your thoughts upon this, and your prayers; that every fresh manifestation of the love, power, and goodness of God, may fully answer the gracious end of sovereign love. The *peculiar* privilege of God's children, has been more insisted on in public this last year than formerly here; of consequence, *they increase* who seek it, both in numbers and grace. May our God raise up many witnesses of it. That Mr. M. may enjoy it, in all its heights and depths, in his own soul, and teach it successfully to others, is the prayer of his well wisher in the Lord Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXVIII.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

Oct. 13, 1796.

As you expressed a desire in your last to hear from me, I wish to gratify it, without expecting an answer, except the Lord gives you power and liberty to favour me with one. You pain me by the reason assigned for your long silence: "A sacred restraint laid upon you, not understanding for what those blessed manifestations were to prepare me: afraid to touch the tender soul, knowing my feelings must be exquisite." It led me to cry to the Lord, that he would shew me clearly, and fully, what he designed by his very gracious dealings with me; and also enable me to fall in

with them. I dread the thought, either of mistaking or thwarting his sacred intentions. Will you assist me here, and when you can easily, let me know your thoughts upon the important business. As yet I see no very great ends answered. I am enabled to bear a more public and decided testimony for Christian perfection by my lips and pen. O that I may do it by my life! I seem, as it were, *set* for the defence and promoting of this important branch of doctrine and experience, and find that the Lord owns me in it, at least so far as it respects my own soul. But I would fain look for far greater things as to others. The prospect was brighter some months ago for the latter; the former, through the tender mercy of my God, increases. I am blessed, frequently, with fresh discoveries of the love and power of a Triune Deity;—with powerful renewals of former manifestations: and, as I freely receive, I endeavour freely to give; if, peradventure, a simple recital might be made useful to others: more especially as it respects the work of sanctification; a doctrine, very little known here. A few in the society do enjoy it; several are pressing after it, and the preachers profess themselves of the number; and do insist upon, and endeavour to explain the doctrine in public and private. But as you justly observe, "The Lord himself must come down amongst us, before great things are accomplished." "O that a little one may become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." From day to day I am made to *taste* of that perfect love that casts out fear; and often

experience a plenitude of the Divine presence. But I most sensibly find, it is only by momentary faith in the blood of Jesus that I am kept from sin: and that my soul is less or more vigorous as I live by faith. For ten months past, my fellowship has been in a peculiar manner with the Father: for some days past, I have been favoured with the most delightful communion with the Son. He hath shone with remarkable brightness upon my soul. Yesterday, a *fear* respecting a future trial, passed quickly through my mind: in that moment, the Sacred Three surrounded me, banished the tempter, and the temptation, and penetrated my inmost soul with a solemn, sweet sense of the presence of Deity. How condescending to dust and ashes is our God, for Jesus' sake. But I long to sink into *all* the depths of humble love. Let us help each other on by earnest prayer. O that we may more than ever be made willing and active recipients of every purchased blessing.

My cares and troubles increased at Hope Chapel till of late the storm abated; but still matters go on poorly. Mr. J. refused the chapel, and I seem to see the Lord's call for another visit in the spring. May his will be done in that business. Mr. S. of Dublin, offers me his service as a stated pastor at H. C. and refers me to Mrs. Johnson, amongst others, for his character. Now, peace be with your spirit. May the sacred attraction increase, till you are lost and swallowed up in the beatific vision, prays your fellow-traveller,

D. Maxwell.

1791.

Death of the Rev. John Wesley—Lady M. again visits Bristol—fresh difficulties at Hope Chapel—change in the mode of conducting public worship—correspondence continued.

An event occurred soon after the commencement of this year, highly important in the annals of Methodism. On the 2d of March, the Reverend John Wesley, after a life of almost unparalleled labours and usefulness, was called to his reward. It has been seen, that this honoured servant of Jesus Christ was rendered highly useful to Lady Maxwell, at the important period, when truth first began to dawn on her mind. By his conversation and letters, he pointed her, as he had done thousands, to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He led her into fellowship with a people, among whom she enjoyed what he ever deemed, the highest privileges; and by correspondence, which had been maintained with him within a short period of his death, he had afforded her advice and assistance on many critical occasions. Though twenty-seven

years had elapsed since first they knew each other, time and circumstances had only tended to increase and confirm their religious union. In one of his last letters to her Ladyship, he thus expressed his high esteem:—"I really love to write to you, as I love to think of you. And sometimes it may please him, who sends by whom he will send, to give you some assistance by me. And your letters have frequently been an encouragement and a comfort to me. Let them never, my dear friend, be intermitted, during the few days I have to stay below."* When the tidings of Mr. Wesley's departure reached her Ladyship, "nature felt keenly" at the loss; yet she was enabled sweetly to bow to the sovereign will of God. Anxious that every proper respect should be paid to such distinguished worth, she had the following advertisement drawn up by her own pen, inserted in the Edinburgh newspapers. "On Wednesday last, at his house, in London, died that great and good man, the Rev. John Wesley, at a very advanced period; after a life of the most unwearied diligence, and unexampled activity in the service of his God, and the general interests of mankind. His extensive labours were crowned with uncommon success in various parts of different and distant kingdoms. But, as might be expected, his very uncommon abilities, and extensive usefulness, laid him under that severe tax, which all must pay, who are so far raised

* Wesley's Works, vol. xvi. p. 291.

above the common level of mankind. Now, that he is no longer the object of envy, it is hoped prejudice will give way to more candid and honourable sentiments, and thereby leave the public at liberty to do justice to one of the greatest characters that has appeared since the apostolic age." Two letters have been selected out of many, which will sufficiently shew what were her Ladyship's views and feelings on this solemn occasion.

Soon after this affecting bereavement, Lady M. was again called to Bristol. The prosperity of the work of God, at Hope Chapel, was an object dear to her heart; but the prospect of doing good, was overshadowed by many an intervening cloud. An amiable young minister, who had for some time officiated there, and who has since, by his printed discourses, delighted and instructed many a pious group around the family altar, had accepted a call to another congregation. Many difficulties presented themselves in securing a suitable successor;—and prejudice against all Dissenters, and dissenting modes of worship, with a strong predilection for our venerable Establishment, generally prevailed at Clifton. Under these circumstances, her Ladyship's presence became necessary. She, therefore, left Edinburgh on the 26th of April; and visiting, as usual, her other chapels in her way, arrived at the Hot Wells on the 12th of the following month. She was at first greatly oppressed and discouraged, on witnessing the

state of affairs; and, for some time, remained uncertain of the path of duty. Her solicitude and fatigue greatly affected the state of her health. But, after fervently imploring direction from the Great Head of the Church, and consulting with those whom she deemed best qualified to afford her light on the subject, she determined to comply with the general wishes of the people, and as far as she could with a clear conscience, "become all things to all men, that she might, by all means, save some." The change which was made, and the plan finally adopted, will be developed in the following letters.

On this part of her Ladyship's conduct, individuals, under the influence of discordant sentiments, will of course judge differently. But it is presumed, that all who impartially examine the motives by which she was actuated—the grand object which she invariably pursued—the calm deliberation with which she weighed every connecting circumstance—her long and continued prayer that she might *know* and *do* the will of God,—will readily acquit her of all intentional wrong, and give her credit for doing what she firmly believed was most likely to secure the benevolent designs of the Foundress of the chapel. The candid, and the pious, will view it as a noble triumph gained over every party feeling, and the strong bias of national prejudice, by a supreme desire to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of immortal souls. And, perhaps, all will allow to her Ladyship, that "modes and

forms are no further useful, than as they are calculated to promote these valuable purposes."* But she shall again speak for herself.

LETTER LXIX.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

Jan. 11, 1791.

The hints which Mr. Mather gave in his last, I proved very seasonable and useful, respecting the trials and temptations consequent upon bearing the burthens of Christians at a throne of grace. I have suffered a good deal from that quarter lately. An unusual spirit of prayer was poured upon me for many weeks. I was constrained to plead earnestly, and frequently; more especially for the prosperity of the Society in Edinburgh: that the Lord would raise up many witnesses of his power to save to the uttermost; and was greatly encouraged herein, more particularly upon Wednesday the 15th of last December. A most remarkable spirit of intercession rested upon me. I seemed to see Jehovah by

* On all points of an extrinsic or circumstantial nature, things superinduced upon Christianity, or which attach to it merely as the deductions of human opinion, the Church of Christ may be internally divided without schism: may admit of diversity, without disunion.—*Conder on Protestant Non-conformity.* B. i. sect. 11. p. 58.

faith, seated on a throne of grace. He condescended to give me a wonderful audience for myself, and all I brought with me in the arms of Christian love and faith. No man ever more literally presented his friend at court, to an earthly sovereign, than I was, by faith, permitted to present particular souls to the King of kings; and to plead for the blessings of which I knew they stood in need, and were seeking after. A prayer-hearing God seemed most graciously to listen to all my petitions, which were chiefly confined to sanctification: nor could I doubt but they were registered, and would be answered. I obtained no particular promises, nor did I seem to require any further confirmation in the important business. A crowd of Christian friends seemed to pour in upon my mind, and pleaded hard to be remembered. This remarkable and solemn interview continued for hours; and had time, strength, &c. permitted me, to improve the precious opportunity to the uttermost, it would, perhaps, have been still better for myself and others. With truth I can say, I gave over asking, before my God gave over listening to my requests. It was a memorable season indeed. But what is particular, the moment I ceased pleading, I entered into a sea of temptation, and was so buffeted of satan, for weeks after, as no language can express. The fiery darts of the enraged adversary so pierced my soul, as to affect my body. My heart was wrung with keen distress. Every inch of ground was disputed with me, and

every grain of my grace was tried to the uttermost. Even the witness for sanctification was attacked. *This* I would not yield, though the combined powers of darkness seemed to unite to wrest it from me. *He* that dwells on high, only knows what I suffered; and he was gracious, and kindly condescended to explain why it was thus with me. He sweetly whispered his pardoning and purifying love to my soul. He did indeed wonderfully uphold me by the right hand of his power; yet, for a time, only so far as to strengthen to endure the appointed time of trial. Mary-like, I pondered all this in my own breast, not thinking it prudent to divulge it to any here. But *now* the tempest is abated; the waters are assuaged; the enemy is rebuked; and my mind is filled with heavenly serenity and Divine composure. I dwell in love, and in God; and enjoy a glorious liberty, through believing. I sweetly rest in Jesus, and enjoy the Spirit's seal for the destruction of the bitter root: and all these trying scenes that so tend to disturb the tenor of placid life, are easily endured, reaching only the surface of the soul. Mr. M. having strengthened me by the useful information conveyed in his last, I would now wish him to help me to improve to the uttermost, from these trying conflicts, which are now happily over.

I hope the Lord will, more than ever, arise and maintain his cause in our Northern clime; more especially as it respects that important

branch of Christian doctrine and experience, *perfect love.*

This has been written in a great hurry, with many interruptions, as I have a variety of secular affairs to attend to this day, which must cover all defects. The situation of Hope Chapel will, I believe, oblige me to go to Bristol in April. It is now almost the only piece of important business that remains unsettled, of all that work left me to finish by my friend, now in glory; and which was so clearly put into my hands by the great Disposer of all events. Upon a retrospect of the whole business, (from first to last enveloped in confusion and perplexity) truly I have great cause to say, "What hath God wrought?" When to this I add, what he hath done for my soul in the course of these four years, in which I have been so fully occupied, I am "lost in wonder, love, and praise." This last year far exceeds any former experience, for depth of communion with Deity; for amazing displays of the love and power of Jehovah; for exertions in his cause, and for his people: "It is mystery all!" Strongly glows the flame of grateful love in my heart. May it burn stronger and stronger, till it mingles with the blaze of eternal day. Wishing you all the fulness of gospel promises, I remain,

Rev. Sir, your humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXX.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

March 14, 1791.

I rejoice to see my good friend's hand once more; and to hear that the Lord is still dealing so tenderly and graciously with her. At present, I am so situated, I can only catch a moment to write a few lines. And so that great and good man is gone! A dispensation, big with importance to thousands. I felt keenly, though perfectly satisfied. A year or two more would have reduced him to a state of childhood: but now he has made an honourable retreat, in the possession of all his mental powers; after a long life of unwearied diligence, and unexampled activity in the service of his God, and the general interests of mankind, and with most uncommon success attending his extensive labours. May the Lord still be the Head of the large body of Christians he has left behind; O that one soul may animate the whole.

It is impossible for me to tell you, how good my God has been to me on this mournful occasion. A spring tide of pure, perfect love has filled my soul. I have felt such a sinking into Jehovah, so lost in his immensity, as I cannot express: no *rapturous joy*, but a full sea of holy humble love. My heart was melted into deep gratitude; its tenderest feelings were called forth; and every degree of that anxiety about future

events which brings weakness into the soul, was entirely excluded. What can I render unto the Lord for this exuberance of goodness, so well suited to my present feelings, when mourning the loss of a valuable friend, and most useful minister of Christ. Truly I am made to rise above the grave of my departed friend, I trace him worshipping before the throne, and by faith hold fellowship with his spirit. Blessed Jesus, how sweet art thou to my soul; the sacred source of all my comforts.

But I want to know my Jesus better. O help me forwards. I do desire to draw many with me, and am helped to speak plainly, and to bear a decided testimony for God. We are gaining ground here, both in numbers and grace. Two of the preachers possess, and openly declare the perfect love of God. The third has made great advances; but has not yet attained. Plead for him. In haste, farewell. May you sink deeper into Jesus, and rise still higher, and continue to assist your fellow pilgrim, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXI.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

March 19, 1791.

I am much indebted to dear Miss Ritchie for her very obliging attention, at a time when she must have been much occupied, and had all her tenderest feelings tried to the uttermost. Your

narrative gave much satisfaction to my mind, though nature felt keenly. I cannot sufficiently adore the goodness of my God; who, from the moment the doleful tidings reached my ears, so encircled me in the Divine arms, so poured his love into my aching heart, as at once to leave it at liberty to pay the tribute so justly due to the memory of the dear departed saint; and, also, to rest with the fullest acquiescence in the Divine will. Surely all things are possible to them that believe. You have been highly privileged these last two winters in being so much with that eminent servant of God; whose life was such a living comment upon the pure doctrines he taught; and, at last, how greatly honoured, in witnessing the closing scene. By faith, I can view him worshipping before Jehovah's throne; and seem to hold fellowship with his happy spirit. I do not know that I ever heard of a life so crowded with action; so unweariedly filled up *with* and *for* God. Not one vacant moment in the twenty-four hours. Many sons have done well; but if I do not view him through a too flattering medium, he excels them all. The Lord enable us, in our small measure, to be faithful; to live more to *him*, by whom it is we live at all.

Lately, my God seems, more than ever, to be fixing me with all his weight of love. He has wonderfully chained up, for a time, the powers of darkness; so that I seem, as it were, to lay becalmed in the midst of a boundless *pacific* ocean of pure love. I prove Divine love a noble, gene-

rous principle; it will not be kept down; it rises above all things, both painful and pleasant. It is an adequate support under every pressure, and a happy preservative against ensnaring temptations. O love Divine, how sweet, how strong thou art. But I am called to higher things, and feebly press on to all the heights and depths of perfect love. From what I feel, I must conclude the heaven of heavens is love.

I pray that dear Miss R— may feel such a spring-tide of this pure element, filling the whole capacity of her soul, on this mournful occasion, as shall effectually dry every tear,—except those that delight; and suppress every sigh,—except those that waft to heaven.

We gain ground here, both in numbers and in grace: and since the melancholy dispensation took place, an uncommon thirst after the word has sensibly increased. O that multitudes may so hear, as to believe; and obtain the final salvation of their souls. So prays, dear Miss Ritchie's affectionate fellow-traveller, and friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXII.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

REV. SIR, *Bristol, June* 24, 1791.

Your Christian letter came in course, but I have been prevented answering by various causes. I have had a severe cold, and also suffered keenly on account of the situation of Hope chapel,

From strong desires for its prosperity, and uncertainty of the path of duty, I had at first opened it upon the dissenting plan; but from the beginning was told, it never would succeed, without admitting the church-service. Not finding liberty to take this step, I continued to carry it on as I had begun; believing that the Lord would lead me into his will, as I had no desire respecting it but *this*. After three years trial, I am now convinced, that the present plan does not reach the generous design of the institution; namely, extensive usefulness, independent of parties, or modes, or forms of worship. These latter, I see, are no further useful than as they are calculated to promote valuable purposes. The eligibility of a change, I now clearly perceive; and what that change should be, the uniform voice of the public leaves me without a doubt. Yet without the word of command from the Great Head of the Church, I durst not proceed. I cried mightily unto the Lord, for light to discover, and power and inclination to do *his will* in this business, and this in great condescension he has given. The way is plain, and I have taken my measures accordingly; without regarding the smiles or frowns of any. I am to adopt the church-service, without putting the chapel under episcopal jurisdiction; to fix a church minister in it, truly alive to God; to have the service only on the Lord's-day; and not to allow admission to the Lord's table without a ticket; to keep the pulpit open for worthy characters of different de-

nominations; together with some other regulations which may be profitable. This design having transpired, has given universal satisfaction; and now, high and low flock to hear. Most of the inhabitants of Clifton are episcopalians, and two-thirds of the vast multitude, that annually resort from all quarters, for the benefit of the waters, are of the same persuasion; all tenacious of their church forms, and would by no means listen to a dissenter.

This revolution, which, I trust is of God, has greatly increased my labours, both of head and hands; but the Lord hath upheld me hitherto; and though thus continually occupied, I have nevertheless had more intercourse with the Methodists here, than ever formerly. I have frequented the Room more, and heard with much satisfaction and profit, especially from Mr. H. Moore. My favourite meetings with the people have indeed been precious seasons; much owned of God. In them, I endeavoured to bear my testimony to the work of sanctification; both as a doctrine, and as experienced in my own soul. I found not a few, just ready to lay hold of the blessing. The Lord gave strength for it, and I found much liberty to speak upon the *only way* of obtaining this further salvation, *simple faith*. And now, after all my feeble attempts, in different ways, to promote the glory of my God and his kingdom among men, I begin to look homewards, being almost worn out; and have a desire, if it is the Lord's will, to meet with Mr. Mather in my

way. I mean to leave here on Thursday the 30th, and would be glad to hear from you before then. Inform me if I should find you at Wakefield about the 12th of July. If all goes well, I think I may reach there by that time, or at least by the 15th.

In great haste, I must conclude this inaccurate epistle. Many interruptions will prove an apology. Wishing Jesus may so dwell in you, as to be the constant solace, the momentary food of your soul, and daily renew your commission to preach with power and success the *whole* gospel, I remain, Rev. Sir, your humble servant in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXIII.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

August 2, 1791.

By the good hand of my God upon me, I reached home on Saturday the 30th, mercifully preserved from danger, though not from fear. To keep clear of the riots at Birmingham, I was obliged to change my road. It was mostly a time of temptation and trial, but my God was at hand to support and deliver; and afforded many opportunities of acting for him, and has also given me cause to praise him since I came home. I long to hear of my Bristol friends; they have been much upon my mind, and I have been led

to hope that the Lord was at work among them. I trust Mrs. G— stands fast in the faith. Tell her it will give me much satisfaction to know this from herself. Worthy Mrs. Valton can, I hope, now firmly believe, that the bitter root is destroyed. I felt much liberty to speak before her amiable husband: may he wax stronger and stronger. Has Mrs. L— yet entered into the promised land? I feel much interested in all of these I met with. I never saw more clearly than when at Bristol the value of *simple faith*. O this does so help me in every situation as words cannot express. It so sensibly draws virtue from the Saviour, as diffuses present healing through my soul, and counteracts the malicious designs of the subtle adversary. Had I a voice that could reach to the ends of the Christian world, I would say to every seeking penitent, only *believe*, and justification is your's; only *believe*, and sanctification is your's. It is this of which my friends at Bristol stand so much in need. Their souls are ripe for the *full* salvation of God. Could I impart this invaluable blessing, how willingly would I do it. May *he*, who is both able and willing, bestow it upon each of them for his Name's sake who died to purchase it. My soul feels on stretch for them. Let us plead mightily with God on their behalf.

I met with a precious old female disciple at Penrith; so strong in the faith, so rooted and grounded in it; so divinely clear in her experience with respect to sanctification, as refreshed

my soul greatly. She has been in this blessed state for many years. I trust your soul sinks deeper, and rises higher, into all the life of God. My soul longs for greater nearness to my God. I feel a sweet sinking into him, but this cannot suffice.

Having much business on hand from my long absence, I must conclude. Shall be glad to hear soon from you, with good accounts of the precious souls with you. Dear Mrs. Johnson's friend in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXIV.

TO THE REV. C. ATMORE, ALNWICK.

December 28, 1791.

Your letter, Rev. Sir, I received in course. I esteem it a privilege, on every proper occasion, to shew my good-will and desire to promote the cause of God. Did my abilities keep pace with my inclinations, my attempts in that way would be more frequent and large. Lately, my engagements of that kind have been more numerous than ever; and I can truly say, my heart has been proportionably enlarged. But in order to *help all*, I have been constrained to give less *to each*, than I otherwise should have done: this will, I hope, preclude the propriety of an apology for the enclosed.

I am glad to hear that the Lord owns the exertions which you are making, both in the spi-

ritual and temporal concerns of his cause; and that he favours you with frequent visits from on high. But is he not willing to do greater things for you? O yes! Devise liberal things of God, and by these you shall stand; and testify, not only that Jesus hath power on earth to forgive sin, but also to cleanse from all unrighteousness. Then commences the eternal sunshine of the spotless mind:

"Desires composed, affections ever even,
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven."

Through the tender mercy of my God, I am enabled still to walk in the liberty of the gospel, to endure as seeing him who is invisible. But, though I have begun to scale the mount of holiest love, I am far from the summit of my wishes. There are heights and depths of the pure love of Jehovah, of which I am kept in continual pursuit; but not so, as thereby to prevent the sweet enjoyment of what is already bestowed.

We have some increase here. Wishing that every revolving season may find you increasing in usefulness, and conformity to the Divine image, and with my own and Christian friends best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Atmore, I am, Rev. Sir, your faithful humble servant in the Lord,

D. MAXWELL.

1792.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

FROM this period, the letters of Lady Maxwell, which have been preserved, become less numerous. We shall, therefore, in tracing the subsequent stages of her experience, have recourse principally to her Diary; reserving, however, the liberty of inserting in chronological order at the end of each year, such extracts from her letters, as may either tend further to elucidate the exercises of her mind, or be calculated to convey instruction to others.

January 7. Agreeably to my earnest desire, I have, through the tender mercy and great indulgence of a God of love, seen greater things indeed. I had frequently prayed that I might terminate the last, and begin this new year, under the peculiar smile of heaven; and of a truth, my expectations were greatly exceeded. Early on Sunday morning, the first day of this year, I had a most wonderful display of the love and power of a Triune God. This continued for many hours, in its full strength; and in a

degree, for several days: it was a most memorable season: I proved the "overwhelming power of saving grace." I would here attempt to give the great outlines, for no human pen can describe all I felt and saw. Early on Sunday morning in secret prayer, God the Father, and Son, drew very nigh. A sense of the Divine presence so penetrated my inmost soul as to arrest the whole powers of my mind, in deep and solemn attention. A spirit of supplication was then poured upon me, for myself and others; while I felt so surrounded with Diety, so let into Jehovah, as no words can express. It seemed as if I might ask what I would, both for myself and others, with confidence that it should be done for me. This glorious and solemn interview continued till half past ten. I then went to chapel, when it was greatly increased. The eternal world felt very nigh: I seemed by faith come to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem. My spirit felt mingling with its blessed inhabitants, while the SACRED THREE felt, as it were, encamping around me. It was glory all—past expression! I seemed to sink deeper into the boundless ocean of pure love. This did not appear to me a solitary blessing, but in a measure diffused through the whole congregation assembled for the purpose of shewing forth the dying love of Jesus. I have learned that many were peculiarly blessed at the time. O my God, what can I say to these things? It is mercy, pure unbounded mercy. Enable me to improve these precious seasons to the utter-

most. O Jesus, keep the loving eye of my faith steadily upon thyself; cover my defenceless head with the shadow of thy wing; then shall I be safe.

——20. Since the 13th, I have experienced the goodness of the Lord: the languor then complained of, has been in a measure removed. On the morning of the 16th, my God strongly impressed upon my heart the following words: "The Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one; therefore, my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail; they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper; their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten. But, O Lord of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them; for unto thee have I opened my cause. Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord; for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil doers."* Immediately after, the following passage seemed to pierce my inmost soul, "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."† It is not easy to say, what my feelings were on this occasion; the words solemnized my mind, and increased my desire and power to pray and watch. They have frequently recurred to my remembrance since, awakening in me a godly jealousy lest I should offend. O how good is the

* Jer. xx. 11—13. † Luke xxi. 36.

Lord to his poor creature, who, in the midst of many weaknesses, desires to love him with all her heart. With what wisdom and tenderness was the word of admonition administered! First strengthening and comforting my soul, by telling me he was with me; and then, warning me of danger, by pointing me to the best preservatives against it. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

May 20. Since my last date, I have gone through a hot furnace of bodily and mental distress. At times, my God and Saviour drew nigh, and often disappointed my fears; but my disorder deeply affecting my nerves and spirits, I suffered keenly. I now learned the propriety and necessity of those Scriptures, which were applied to my mind before the commencement of this great affliction. Alas! fear chilled my soul, and in a measure sunk me from God; at least, from that degree of sweet communion with the Father and Son, with which I had been favoured for four or five years. Words can faintly express what I have suffered. O that all may be sanctified to the utmost, and be succeeded by love so *matured*, as to exclude all *doubt* and *fear*. In many things, during my illness, I saw the hand of God, and had cause to bless him for his tender dealings: but still the powers of darkness were permitted to harass me greatly; and I did not, as I ought, glorify my God in the midst of the fires. One lesson my God has been teaching me all along—the virtue, the necessity of simple faith; that by *faith*, and not *joy*, I

must live. He has, in a measure, often enabled me so strongly to act faith on Jesus for sanctification, even *in the absence of comfort*, as diffused a heaven of sweetness through my soul, and brought with it the powerful witness for purity. The Lord has also been teaching me to die to all self-complacency. He hath shewed me much of my weakness, nothingness, poverty, and emptiness; and, at the same time, how simple faith brings Divine life into the soul. Within these few days, he has begun to repeat former manifestations of love, but they are generally succeeded by temptation. Though restored in a measure, it is as yet a state of spiritual weakness, but I fervently desire an increase of every grace.

June 22. During the last fortnight, I have been travelling for the benefit of my health, and have cause to say, the end has been in some measure answered. Many opportunities have offered for the spiritual and temporal benefit of others: O that an effectual blessing may follow the efforts. The Lord graciously interposed in times of danger on the road. In mercy he brought me home on the 20th, and enabled me to testify of his goodness to my soul when with his children. His dealings with me for some time past have been widely different from former times; he seems to call me now especially to live by faith, and to listen to the various teachings of his Spirit. O that I may profit by all, and be enabled to glorify my God under every varied dispensation.

August 24. I have been again visited with bodily affliction, but my God dealt tenderly with me while it continued, and has in mercy removed it. I would observe with gratitude, that while it remained, the tide of spiritual temptations run in a low channel. I had more comfort, more liberty at a throne of grace, and felt powerfully the witness for sanctification. The Lord teaches me, it is by *simple faith alone* that I can either obtain, retain, or increase, with regard to any gospel blessing; and this mode of proceeding he condescends to own. I see it is owing to the mighty power of God, that I have been enabled to stand in any measure, in the midst of floods of temptations which have recently prevailed. But, O, I want to see greater things—to get faster on—to obtain more powerful renewals of former blessings. Hasten, Lord, the happy time.

October 26. I have lately known both the sweets of deep communion with the Father and Son, and also the depths of temptation: may both answer valuable purposes. On Monday last, in the evening, when in secret prayer, I was most unexpectedly favoured with a richer manifestation of the love of God than for many months before. The Father and Son broke in upon my soul with sweet surprise, which filled me with speechless awe. A deep sense of Deity surrounded and pierced my inmost soul. I could hardly credit my own feelings, or converse with mortals all that evening. This happy visitation

continued for several days; but lest I should be exalted above measure, a messenger of satan was permitted to buffet me for a short season. This I felt exceedingly painful, and it gradually lessened my joys. The wormwood and gall of severe temptations are very bitter, after such heights of spiritual enjoyments: but I believe they are very common. The Lord make me faithful in every situation. My prayer was for much of that conquering faith, which pain, and fear, and death defies;—for the spirit of power, that I might stand unmoved; sink deeper into self-knowledge, and rise higher in Divine wisdom and love.

December 7. How shall I record the loving-kindness of my gracious God! How sufficiently praise him! On Monday evening, while hearing a discourse from "Grow in grace," it was inwardly suggested, and surely from on high,—"You should lift up your heart in prayer to God for his presence and blessing upon his people." Being enabled immediately to comply with the heavenly exhortation, through abounding mercy, I quickly caught the answer of returning grace. In a moment, God the Father, and Son, drew very nigh, and the place seemed filled with the Divine presence, and with it my inmost soul felt deeply penetrated. The heavenly attraction was strong, and the intercourse open: the love of God flowed in copious streams into my breast, and I trust the blessing was general. Since then, I have continually tasted celestial sweetness, and

have rejoiced as a daughter of Zion, because of an indwelling God. Yet, though faith in some measure feels lost in fruition, the *direct witness* for sanctification is not so distinct. My enjoyment consists chiefly of delightful fellowship with the Father and the Son; and a continual sense of their presence, without almost a thought either of justification or sanctification. I trust a flame is kindled in my breast that shall never be extinguished. I have had, as is generally the case, when so highly favoured, furious attacks from the adversary of souls: these have affected deeply, but not robbed me of my heavenly Guests. I asked a token for good before the end of the year; and O, how graciously has God granted my request!

LETTER LXXV.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

January 24, 1792.

I long to know what has become of my valuable correspondent, who has been now silent for many months. Perhaps the cause of this originates in myself: I believe I stand indebted to him for one letter. But as he knows that necessary attention to the work committed to me, sets a seal upon a very large proportion of my time, might he not sometimes give me two for one. A few minutes of his valuable time, spent in accelerating the motion of a soul to-

wards its centre, that has many things to retard its progress, would not, it is hoped, be a fruitless service to either.

I hope that "I deeper sink, and higher rise." I have never known so much of the nature of *simple faith*, or its unspeakable value, as since I tasted of the pure love of God. Plying this oar, I mean the *direct act of faith*, in stripping times, how is my soul upheld in the midst of temptations: at one time so subtle, it requires superior light to discover the cloven foot; at another, so furious, I am obliged to suspend, as far as possible, the power of thought, in order to *reject* the *injections* of the adversary. Who can speak the value of simple faith? Without it, how soon should I become weak as others. Surely, my God does all things well and wisely: for if, with the mariner, I am permitted to go down sometimes into the deeps, it is only to be brought up again to see the wonderful works of the Lord. Can any have greater cause to praise him? I mean not to insinuate that I have more grace than others; but, that my situation, from particular circumstances, requires much Divine teaching, much comfort, much tenderness, superior attention, much direction; and all this a God of love vouchsafes me, and in a way that keeps me dependant upon *himself*, deeply sensible to whom I am indebted.

I am daily aiming at all the *perfection* of nature and grace, that a probationary state of comparative *imperfection* will admit; but have the daily

mortification to find, I am far *short*, though not *wide* of the mark. Do you approve of this distinction? I mean (lest you should mistake me) not out of the right road.

I shall be glad to hear that you are making rapid progress heavenwards; and also favoured with much success in your ministerial labours: and I am, Rev. Sir, your faithful, humble servant in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXVI.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Jan. 24, 1792.

When I received dear Miss Ritchie's kind letter, I was at the Hot Wells, Bristol, in a very poor state of health; partly owing to great and continual exertions both of body and mind. I felt a little of our dear Lord's sufferings, when he said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Such was the weakness of my animal frame at that time, that even the pleasing and very profitable seasons I enjoyed frequently, with Christians in Bristol, were too much for me. They were, indeed, precious opportunities. The Lord was with us of a truth. I hope ever to retain a grateful sense of his goodness at that time, both to myself and others. I have not yet regained my usual health; but blessed be a God of love, the scale of blessings greatly preponderates in my soul. I am still permitted to walk in the liberty

of the gospel; to enjoy delightful fellowship with the Father and the Son: a holy familiarity with Jehovah; at times so near, so solemn, and faith so realizing the sacred presence, that mortal language would in vain attempt to express what is seen, what is felt: and in short, what passes between the Majesty of heaven and dust and ashes, upon these very solemn and very important occasions. Suffice it to say, it is glory all, and all Divine. As far as I understand the mind of the Lord, these sacred interviews are granted for the spiritual benefit of others, as well as myself. There is generally a remarkable spirit of prayer and supplication poured upon me for the prosperity of the Lord's people; and I am so permitted to plead for them, so let into Jehovah, so made to see by faith *him* that is invisible, as I can no ways express. Blessed be the Lord for a capacity to enjoy it! At other times, my intercourse is, in a peculiar manner, with God the Son: *then* the grandeur of Majesty is absorbed in pure love. I sink down into a boundless ocean of perfect love. O that I may improve to the uttermost these great privileges.

My situation, from various causes, requires much of the presence of God—much Divine teaching, support, and comfort; and, in tender mercy, he bestows it. But you must not conclude that I have a perpetual sunshine. No! I have *sifting times*, when every grain of grace is tried: diversified temptations prevail, and Divine comforts run in a low channel. These are

chasms, which the Lord shews me, I must endeavour to fill up with *faith* and *prayer*. He sensibly strengthens me to endure; and thus kept, I soon emerge, I humbly hope, with some advantage: with fresh proofs of the Lord's goodness; with deeper convictions of my own weakness; and with clearer views of the suitability of Jesus in all his mediatorial characters. How good, how tender, is our God! Surely, as one whom his mother comforteth, so doth he deal with us. And it is no small mercy that we are not permitted to rest in present attainments. Perhaps this is one end that is answered by these changes we sometimes experience for the worse, according to our own apprehension; though I believe it is only an alteration in point of *enjoyment*, not of *possession*: for I have found a degree of danger, of sinking down too much into the extatic sweets of present enjoyment, when my soul was in its zenith of fellowship with the Triune God. It would be very desirable to feel the soul every moment ascending with an even flame; but I am doubtful whether the animal frame, in its present state, can admit of this.

Surely "It doth not yet appear what we shall be:" it is enough to know, that when Christ shall "appear, we shall be like him." Hail, auspicious morn! Till then, let us press on, and with unabating vigour, nobly struggle through every difficulty. "And yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come."

I enter into dear Miss Ritchie's tender and acute feelings, when taking a retrospect of the

great loss she has sustained, by the departure of a justly dear and invaluable friend. Perhaps, the most costly sacrifice she ever offered up to *Him*, who *claims* and possesses all her heart. I have been uncommonly carried above almost every painful thought and feeling, since Mr. W— left our world, by being allowed one invariable and delightful view of him, as worshipping before the throne. This keeps me perfectly alive to the full value of his character; softens, and sweetly melts my heart; and will, I trust, accelerate my motion heavenward. His death, I believe, has been made a blessing to many, by him whose prerogative it is to extract good from seeming evil.

As I cannot always command my time, part of this was written some days ago. Since then, I have had a most precious view of a Triune Deity, which still remains with me, more clear than formerly. What an immense treasure is *here* opened to the Christian by simple faith. In diversified distress, how soothing, in our best times: what a splendid thought, to be surrounded with the Sacred Trinity! "It is mystery all!" The line of reason is too short to fathom the depth of his love: our understanding too limited to conceive properly of its dignity.

But my paper admonishes me that I must have done. Do you follow out the glorious theme, and enlarge upon it in your next; which I hope to be able to answer sooner than I have done your last. D. MAXWELL.

1793.

State of the nation at this period—spread of infidelity—war proclaimed with France—meetings for prayer among Christians—Diary and correspondence continued.

Before we proceed to further extracts from her Ladyship's writings, it may be proper briefly to advert to the state of the nation at this period, in order to illustrate many of her subsequent allusions. This, indeed, will tend to shew, in awful contrast, the influence of infidel and irreligious principles, when compared with the genuine tendency of the gospel of Christ, as displayed in these volumes. To those conversant with the history of Europe, it will be readily remembered, that the most fearful convulsions were, at this time, threatening to shake the very basis of all civil, political, and ecclesiastical establishments. The horrid principles, maintained by the atheistical and infidel philosophers of France, had already spread anarchy, devastation, and misery throughout every rank and order of her vast population. By the levelling influence of these degraded, and degrading principles, all

their religious houses had been suppressed—the property of the clergy confiscated—the clergy themselves deprived of all their judiciary functions—and the very plate of their churches converted into currency. Having thrown down the altar, they proceeded, with the most infatuated violence, to further outrage; and under the specious pretence of liberty and equality, abolished all titular distinctions, and feudal rights ;* and declared the kingly authority to be extinct. Having, further, endeavoured to eradicate from their minds all sense of moral responsibility, and all apprehensions of a coming eternity—without law, and consequently without controul, they indulged, without remorse, the most savage and brutal passions; and stood forth, before the astonished gaze of the world, a nation of lawless banditti. Besides a number of dreadful massacres at Paris, and elsewhere, in the course of the preceding year, the destructive guillotine was invented; and France was now covered with scaffolds, on which an immense quantity of blood was shed. To this blind and infuriated rage, during the present year, Louis XVI. first, and afterwards Marie Antoinette of Austria, his bereaved widow, fell a sacrifice. And, as if determined to carry their blasphemy to the most

* On the 25th of August, 1792, the archives of the order of St. Esprit, and the titles of nobility, enrolled in the convent of the Great Augustines, at Paris, with all the registered proofs of nobility, amounting to nearly 600 huge folios, were publicly burned in the *Place Vendome*.

awful degree of daring, and, if possible, dethrone Jehovah himself; on the seventh of the ensuing December, the public exercise of the national religion was forbidden, and the worship of reason, liberty, and other imaginary deities, established in its stead.*

* "The only instance in which infidels of any description have possessed the supreme power and government of a country, and have attempted to dispose of human happiness according to their own doctrines and wishes, is that of *France*, since the beginning of the revolution. If we consider this government as established over a nation, educated for ages to the belief and obedience of many doctrines of Christianity, and retaining, as to a great majority of the people, the habits formed by that education, the state of that nation will evince, beyond a question, that all which I have said [on the dreadful tendency of infidelity,] is true, without exaggeration. *France*, during this period, has been a theatre of crimes, which, after all preceding perpetrations, have excited in the mind of every spectator, amazement and horror. The miseries, suffered by that single nation, have changed all the histories of the preceding sufferings of mankind into idle tales, and have been enhanced, and multiplied, without a precedent, without number, and without name. The kingdom appeared to be changed into one great *prison*; the inhabitants converted into *felons*, and the common doom of man commuted for the violence of the sword and the bayonet, the sucking boat, and the guillotine. To contemplative men it seemed for a season, as if the knell of the whole nation was tolled, and the world summoned to its funeral. Within the short time of ten years, not less than *three millions* of human beings are supposed to have perished, in that single country, by the influence of atheism." Were such principles universally prevalent, "*appetite* would change every man into a *swine*, and *passion* into a *tyger*. Right would neither be acknow-

Happy would it have been for Britain had the operation of these detestable principles been confined to the other side of the channel. But the infernal leaven which had, more or less, diffused itself through every nation of Europe, was, at this period, banefully tainting the minds and morals of multitudes in our own happy country. The infamous Paine, and his coadjutors, zealous in the service of infidelity, had given circulation to an astonishing number of volumes and pamphlets; and addressing themselves, in artful language, to the passions and prejudices of the lower orders in society, too well succeeded in their diabolical purposes. Symptoms of insubordination were manifested in different parts of the country,—apprehensions of insurrection created alarm; and the people of Britain, reflecting on the horrid outrages which had recently occurred

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ledged, nor be felt, nor exist. Whatever was coveted would be sought, and obtained, if it could be done with safety. Whatever was hated, would, so far as safety would permit, be hunted and destroyed. To deceive, to fraud, to betray, to maim, to torture, and to butcher, would be the common employment, and the common sport. The dearest and most venerable relations would be violated by incestuous pollution; and children, such of them I mean as were not cast under a hedge, thrown into the sea, or dashed against the stones, would grow up without a home, without a parent, without a friend. The world would become one vast den; one immeasurable stye; and the swine and the wolf would be degraded, by a comparison with its inhabitants." May God preserve Britain from the influence of such infernal principles.

Vide Dwight's Theology explained, &c. vol. 1, *p.* 51.

on the Continent, felt as if under the tremour of a general panic.

In addition to these affecting particulars, at the commencement of this year, war was proclaimed between England and France, and the nation was involved in all the calamities of a long and fearfully bloody contest. Great commercial distress became almost universal; and a full tide of bankruptcy setting in, swept away the independence and comfort of many a happy family. For several of the following years, our island was menaced by its foreign enemies; formidable preparations were made for invading its shores; and the public mind was thus long kept in a fearfully perturbed and agitated state.

Lady Maxwell, in common with other pious persons, recognised in all this the righteous government of God. She viewed these calamities as indications of his just displeasure. She lamented the aboundings of infidelity and ungodliness; and, contrasting these with the religious privileges which England enjoyed, she could not but fear the most alarming consequences. Under these apprehensions, she believed, that the salvation of our guilty land depended solely on the mercy and seasonable interposition of a gracious God; and that it was the duty of Christians to seek for this mercy, by a general humiliation, and by fervent prayer. She therefore endeavoured to excite the pious, of different denominations in Edinburgh, to meet frequently together, in their respective places of worship, for these express

purposes; that, by prevailing intercession, every impending judgement might be averted. In this labour of true Christian patriotism, she was successful, and meetings for prayer were established in different places throughout the city. She also endeavoured to stimulate her correspondents, in distant parts, to engage in the same important duty; and about this time a spirit of solemn intercession was diffused throughout the country. To the man who discards the Scriptures, and to the mere nominal professor, who considers not the blessings annexed to faithful prayer, all this may appear as useless and unavailing; but the man who believes his Bible, and lives in the habit of prayer, will, at all times, under similar circumstances, place more dependence on the prayers of the faithful, than in the skill of our commanders—the number and valour of our armies—the vastness of our resources—or even in the wooden walls of Great Britain. "The battle is not to the strong." "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might;—let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgement, and righteousness in the earth." "Put not your trust in princes, for vain is the help of man." After these remarks we shall again recur to the Diary.

March 15. I have lately been favoured with

repeated opportunities of shewing forth the dying love of Jesus. The last of them I found a sacred time; the place, a sacred spot; the work, a sacred employment;—Deity felt nigh: yet no remarkable joy attended the Divine presence. These last two weeks I have been looking for, and hastening to, a more full enjoyment of perfect love. I look to be "filled," (as the Lord hath promised) "with the knowledge of his will; in all wisdom, and spiritual understanding; that I may walk before him unto all pleasing." O how ardently do I desire this! It is only by faith, I know, that I can attain; but here I am often foiled, and day after day passes on with very little progress. These last days I have, through assistance from above, got through some important business. I see the hand of the Lord in it, and endeavour to give him the glory: but it is better blessings which I covet, and which he hath promised. Come, Lord, from above, fill and overflow my soul with thy pure love, and remove whatever hinders its full course.

April 19. Still I have to record the loving-kindness of the Lord; yet not in that degree I long for. I would be thine, O Lord! I would, thou knowest, *be altogether thine.* Come, then, holy God, and work more powerfully in me, and by me. Give a stronger testimony from thy Spirit, for the work wrought in me. My happiest moments are when I believe it, and simply live by faith: but from this point, I am drawn many times by the subtle devices of the adversary, and

the *multifarious business* in which I am engaged, yet all with a view to duty. Lord, increase my faith. I found, this week, the word preached from, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect," blessed to me. But my experience is so far short of my desires, as proves sometimes matter of grief: yet, when I consider my unprofitableness and unfaithfulness, I have cause to be thankful for a grain of grace. Yesterday, a national fast: I felt something of the spirit of the occasion. I was truly desirous of mourning for a guilty nation, and for myself; and felt humbled on my own account. This day I felt disposed to lie low before God, yet to plead for great things, because Jesus hath purchased them for all that believe and obey him. I would be all life, light, love, power. O Lord, is any thing too hard for Thee!

May 31. *Prince's-street.* The Lord has in mercy heard my requests, for he has turned my captivity, and put a song of praise in my mouth. "O to grace how great a debtor." Since the 17th instant, my God has done much for me. He has provided my present habitation as a temporary provision, till the house I have taken for some years, if spared, be ready for me. I literally knew not where to lay my head: but I looked unto the Lord, and he heard and answered. O that I may glorify him! In the many difficulties attending my double removal, he hath supported; and since I came here, has out-done my expectations, both as to health of body and mind. I am a wonder unto myself: but it is the doing of

the Lord, and truly marvellous in my eyes. He gave me repeated tokens for good before I left my last house. According to my desires, he sent his ministering servants repeatedly; and much prayer was offered up: and here also, I have enjoyed that privilege, time after time. In the course of these eight days, the Lord has been with us of a truth, and made it a refreshing time. Beyond my hopes, he carried me from here several miles on Sunday last, to commemorate the dying love of Jesus; and truly he made it a memorable time. My God shone upon his work in my soul, and greatly brightened my evidences for perfect love. Jesus made himself known afresh to me in the breaking of bread: and when I tasted the cup, a Divine sensation seemed to overspread my soul, and even affect my body. I seemed surrounded with the heavenly host. Satan made a bold push to disturb my heaven of indescribable enjoyment; but a stroke of Omnipotence drove him far away. What can I render unto the Lord for his goodness!

August 23. Still I have to record the loving-kindness of the Lord, which, though much greater than I deserve, is still far short of my desires. On Sunday last, in public, I found my soul sensibly strengthened and confirmed in the ways of God; my heart lifted up, and encouraged to press on with respect to sanctification, notwithstanding the poorness of my progress and attainments. The moment I allow one thought that would encourage a doubt of the work, I feel

like a city without gates; without defence against the adversary; as a ship without its rudder; yea, so feeble, that the weakest blast would overset me. On the contrary, every direct act of faith for the blessing is instantly followed with strength of soul, serenity of mind, and a sweet testimony from on high to the work wrought. Yea, I feel as a garrison well fortified; able, through faith in Jesus, to turn the enemy from the gate. But I want a stronger evidence, from the fruit of the Spirit, as a corroborating witness. Give it, O Lord, for thy Name's sake. I feel a deep consciousness of my weakness, ignorance, unfaithfulness, unfruitfulness, which is sometimes discouraging.

October 11, Friday. Of a truth my God has dealt bountifully with me since my last. I ventured to ask a token for good, before I left my temporary habitation in Edinburgh, and he in much mercy granted my desire repeatedly. Monday evening, in public, God the Father, and Son, drew sensibly nigh, and favoured me with sweet fellowship, and opened my mouth to praise him. He not only permitted me to dwell upon the sweet subject of his great kindness to me, at the time, in my own mind, but constrained me to tell those that love him what he had done for my soul. And on Tuesday, O how graciously did my heavenly Father deal with me, while conversing with a minister of Christ: he opened his liberal hand, and gave largely to both; it was a memorable time. O how good is God to the souls that seek him. Yet, in the evening,

temptation prevailed, and my soul was grieved: but still my God continued his kindness. I felt ashamed, and fled afresh to the blood of sprinkling. Wednesday was a day of trial and variegated temptation: I endeavoured to flee into my strong hold, that the Lord might lift up a standard. In the evening, came to my new habitation, *(Rosemount)*, which I trust the Lord has provided for me. It is *most certain* he would not *permit* me to go to another I had in view, and wished to have. He so evidently shewed me that it would be contrary to his will, I was obliged to desist. Since the time I fixed on this place, (though *at first* he made every mountain of difficulty melt into a mole-hill,) it has been a source of trouble and vexation: but since I came to it, he has made it a sweet habitation. I asked a mark of his favour, and in mercy, the morning after I came here, he granted my request repeatedly, both in secret prayer and in reading the Scriptures. He has indeed given me precious seasons; delightful communion with heaven; ineffable sweetness diffused through my soul; Divine peace and comfort in private, family, and secret duties. Surely, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." One temptation which I had long laboured under, he seems entirely to have removed. O that I may be humble, and thankful, and enabled to improve to the uttermost the loving-kindness of the Lord. O that it may increase. Still I see the necessity of *living by faith*; especially for sanctification.

November 1. Since the 11th of October,

words would fail to tell of the goodness of the Lord, in public and private, at home and abroad, in the house, and by the way. Not in exemption *from* temptation; no, but in *support* and *comfort* under it, and in deliverances from it; in repeated manifestations of his love and power; and in sweet fellowship with the Father and the Son. At one time, while enduring a flood of temptation, Jehovah drew so nigh, appeared so clear to the eye of faith, so penetrated my soul with a sense of his presence, as might well excite my wonder, love, and praise. He so confounded the powers of darkness, so sensibly lifted up a standard, as made all within confess a present God; and he has thus abode with me ever since, though not always with the same degree of love, joy, or freedom from temptation: yet so, as often made me involuntarily to express these words: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." In the view of leaving home for a week or two, and travelling for health, I earnestly asked a token for good, and he condescended to give it, after I had called my family together, to request his blessing upon those that went, and those that were to remain. He preserved man and beast, carried through difficulties, disappointed fears, gave courage to own him and his cause in different parts, and with different denominations: and favoured me with humberless opportunities for attempting the spiritual and temporal good of my fellow-creatures, and gave power to embrace them. The issue is

left with *Him*, who knows the end from the beginning; and who can make the feeblest means effectual for the greatest ends. And now, in tender mercy, he hath brought me home, having infinite cause to say, not only that he is the Hearer of prayer; but that "God is love." But I feel much cause to regret, that I come so far short in all; that I do not make greater progress, when so highly favoured. O Lord, remove the cause, that the effect may cease. My soul longs for greater nearness to God; for more power to glorify and enjoy him; for more extensive usefulness; for more holiness; a clearer witness for the enjoyment of that pure love, that casts out fear; and for more power to live by faith.

December 22, Friday. Still my God continues and increases his kindness to a creature unworthy of it. On Thursday the 14th, he condescended to give me a sweet manifestation of the Holy Trinity; and a very clear perception of the *personality* of the blessed Spirit: more so than for a long time past. This view of the whole Godhead was attended with a Divine sweetness, and has been continued ever since; so that I have felt surrounded with Deity: and the testimony of the Spirit for sanctification has at times been peculiarly clear; more especially just after conversing with a minister upon the subject, and simply expressing my ideas of it, both as a doctrine, and as experienced in a small measure in my own soul, through the great goodness of my God, and for the sake of his adorable Son,

O that I may be made faithful, and enabled to press on for every degree of it, attainable in the body. Last evening, the Lord shone peculiarly clear upon his work in general, and gave me some comfortable hope that I was not standing still, as I feared. This was after many applications to the Hearer of prayer, to quicken my pace; and after many times lamenting my shortcomings, and fearing I was making no progress. O that I could love, and serve, a thousand times more, my gracious and compassionate heavenly Father. Lord, increase my ability; increase my faith. I feel a growing sense of the littleness of all earthly things, and the solemn weight and importance of those belonging to eternity: also, of the uncertainty and shortness of time, and the great necessity of improving it; and feel strongly drawn to fill up every precious moment with something valuable. I have much cause to praise the Lord for many mercies, spiritual and temporal; and, among others, for a longer measure of health, since I came to Rosemount, than for a long time before. O that I may use it for him who gives it. Truly he is the God that performeth all things for me; and my trust is not in an arm of flesh, but in himself, who so often disappoints my fears. I look that he will cause me to end this year, and begin the new one, with much of the Divine presence.

LETTER LXXVII.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

January 10, 1793.

I take the opportunity of a frank to send a few lines to my friend, whose last was most acceptable. I trust our gracious God still continues his kind and most seasonable support in the midst of various distressing circumstances; and thereby enables you not only to stand in the evil day, but to glory in your infirmities, that the power of the adorable Saviour may rest upon you; that his love may fill and overflow your soul.

> "O love, how cheering is thy ray,
> All pain before thy presence flies."

I am pleased with your accounts of Mrs. G—; I hope my letter to her, inclosed in my last to you, came safe to hand. I feel much liberty in pleading that you, and those who join with you, may be enabled to wrestle in mighty prayer; and seem to anticipate your victory. I rejoice that you are returned to your place again; this will strengthen the hands of many, and confirm their feeble knees, who might otherwise have been turned out of the way. And, O, how pleasing to God, to see his dear children steadfast and immoveable in trying times; especially those who have been long in the way, and who have borne the heat and burthen of the day. To prevent this, satan has had recourse to these painful tempta-

tions you mention; hoping thereby to fix all your attention upon your own soul, and so lessen your sphere of usefulness. But blessed be our compassionate High Priest, who hath counteracted all his malicious designs against you, and put a song of praise in your mouth.

I have much cause to praise a God of love, for his kindness to me, since I wrote last. Sweet and repeated have been the precious manifestations of his love; of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: sometimes together, and at others, *distinct* communications of grace, from each Sacred Person. Since last week, in the class-meeting, I seem to have anchored *more sensibly* within the vail. The eye of my soul has been invariably fixed upon *Jehovah*, and his eye most sensibly fixed on me. I surely have this evidence of purity: "*I do see God.*" Yet I have not, I think, such a strong testimony of the Spirit as I sometimes have had, when my views of God were not so clear. At times, I have very humbling views of *self*, and should sink very low, but for that faith that realizes unseen things, and shews me where I stand. Perhaps these exercises of mind, that so empty one of self in every shape, are preparatory to greater and deeper entrances into the depths of Deity.

"*I do dwell alone.*" These words, one day, lately, came very seasonably to my mind, as being the case with God's Israel of old, when tried with various temptations, and among others, that of *standing alone*. I seem to have

none with me. I have indeed a lonely path; but blessed be my heavenly Father, I have the Sacred Three with me. My heart expands with desire for more of God; and for greater usefulness to his people. I would more than ever fill up every moment with, and for God. Assist me, my friend: O let us pray always and never faint. The state of public affairs tries me much. I fly unto my God, and cry that he would yet continue our glorious privileges. But I must finish. May he continually surround you, and keep you as in the hollow of his hands, prays your friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXVIII.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

March 22, 1793.

Dear Mrs. Johnson's letter written in the spirit, was, I hope, perused in it. I feel both my need, and the value, of a spiritual friend. Your determination I wish ever to abide by: "To have no fellowship with any, but in the Spirit." O may that Holy Spirit knit our thankful hearts more closely to our Living Head, the sacred source of calm repose. All the dealings of the Lord with me, for the last twelve months past, have been very *self-humbling*. Many, very many, stripping seasons I have had, which seem to discover, more and more, the depth of the fall. I have indeed nothing whereof to boast, nothing

but what I have received. I am made truly conscious of my poverty and helplessness; this keeps me, perhaps, more sensible of my dependence than I should otherwise be; and creates, and keeps up, such a hungering and thirsting after larger measures of the Divine life, after God, and the possession of all his communicable fulness, as I cannot express. It mightily endears a Saviour to me: his suitability I so deeply feel, that my whole soul rests on him. Added to this, is the appointment, or at least, permission, by him who cannot err, of every possible modification of temptation; with a view, I doubt not, to promote the great and salutary purpose of drawing me more and more out of self, and sinking me deeper and deeper into Deity; till lost in the boundless ocean of love. But my receipts are so far short of my vast desires, that perhaps I am not always so thankful, or so sensible, as I ought to be, of what I have already received. My God is still most sensibly enforcing the necessity of living by simple faith; and indeed it is never better with me than when I do; *every act* brings in an increase. But the combined powers of darkness uniformly oppose this mode of living. I trust my gracious God will give me a fuller deliverance. Assist me with your prayers, till I obtain. I have at times such glorious views of sinking into Jehovah, and of what he is able to do for me, as I cannot explain; of such holy nearness to, and fellowship with Jesus, as is pleasing to experience: more especially, when considered

as foretastes of what shall be shortly my permanent experience. The Scriptures do so help, so strengthen and comfort, in all my various situations of soul, as is matter of great thankfulness. Forgive this minute detail.

I bless the Lord, who deals not only tenderly, but bountifully with you; and will, no doubt, in every case shew you the most excellent way. He calls at present for a costly sacrifice, which you will doubtless offer freely, upon that altar which sanctifies the gift.

I am pleased to hear that Mrs. G— still stands, and I hope you will remember me to her. Tell her, from me, that she is called, in a peculiar manner, in these very trying times, to stand firm, as a wall of brass, and as an iron pillar strong, in every difficulty. And thus, having endured temptation, she shall inherit the blessings annexed to the promises. I hope you will have wisdom given you from above; more and more be enabled to glorify your God, though in the fires; and increase daily in usefulness to his church and people.

I see that your present situation is both critical and difficult, and I endeavour to hold it up to your God daily, who has fitted you for it; and who will make you more than conqueror, through the blood of the Lamb. Go, then, thou servant of God, in his strength, and thy God will be with thee; and level every mountain, and raise every valley. He has given a large sphere of usefulness at this time, but satan will dispute every inch of ground: yet fear not; he shall fall

like Dagon before the ark; only be thou very courageous for the Lord thy God. Forgive the liberty of thus writing, but I feel pressed in spirit to do it. Remember the weakness of the writer, and, believe me, your friend in the best bonds, D. MAXWELL.

1794.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

January 3. The year 1793 is fled—it is numbered, and returned to him who gave it. Tell me, O my soul, what report has it carried with it as to thee? Could it say that it was thy constant desire and attempt to improve it for eternity?—for the glory of God, the good of thy fellow-creatures, and thy own best interest? What shall I say? O my God, if my heart do not deceive me, in a very low degree this has been the case. In all I have failed, but still at all this I have aimed. Upon a retrospect, I find much cause to thank my God, for mercies more in number than the hairs of my head, spiritual and temporal: for precious manifestations of Divine love and power; for various discoveries of the will of God; various teachings of the Holy Spirit, more especially respecting faith as to sanctification; and for much countenance in my attempt to live by

faith; for many remarkable and speedy returns to prayer for myself and others; for many interpositions in my behalf in troublesome cases, and perplexing business; for clear discoveries of the sacred Trinity—of the personality of the Holy Ghost; for much sweet fellowship with the Father, and the Son; for some little success in my feeble attempts to promote the spiritual good of others, especially Christians; for power to make many exertions, above my own strength, both in speaking, acting, and writing; for assistance in pecuniary matters, whereby I could more largely help others, &c. &c. When all these mercies, O my God, my wondering soul surveys, what humble, grateful love, should fill my heart!

March 7. Of a truth my God has been good to me since the 28th of February. On Sunday, I partook of the supper of the Lord, and upon the whole, the Lord was good to me; though not so much in the way of joy. On Monday evening, in public, the Lord Jesus surprised me with a glorious visit. With the Father also, I had fellowship; but the precious manifestation was in a more peculiar manner with the Son. For a long time past, my intercourse has been more sensibly with Jehovah himself; yet, through the medium of the Son: there is no other way of access to the Father. O how altogether lovely did Jesus appear! How inexpressibly sweet his love! Words fail to express either; but his presence, I may say, constitutes my heaven. In

private, the same night, this goodness was repeated; and, through the week, my God seemed to bring and keep me near to himself; underneath, and around were spread the everlasting arms. But I feel surprised, and grieved, that I am not more remarkably changed into the Divine image, by those frequent and delightful manifestations of his love. O, my God, roll away my reproach in this respect! and enable me to the utmost, to take the mould Divine—for the glory of thy Name, the profit of my fellow-creatures, and the comfort of my own soul. O let every intermediate space be filled up with an increase of every grace of the Holy Spirit! Fears, as to public affairs, have increased, and yet liberty to plead with God concerning them continues. Lord God Omnipotent, arise and work for our safety; and O take not the gospel from us; permit us not to fall into cruel hands! Send a spirit of reformation and conversion plentifully down upon us, and stir up thy children to prayer.

April 11. The goodness of my God continues, with the addition of a keener edge on my spirit, to increase with all the increase of the Lord. On last Sabbath, a song of praise was put in my mouth. I felt rejoicing in my God in social prayer, and Christian conference. On Monday, Jehovah felt very nigh all day; yet I was exercised with painful temptations all the while. On Wednesday evening, it was a sweet time in public; and on Thursday, at home, my God disappointed my fears, and opened my mouth to

tell of his goodness to those that fear him. O how gracious is he to an unworthy creature! In the course of these last eight days, he has given me many opportunities of acting for him, which is the delight of my soul. O that he may bless my feeble efforts for his dear Son's sake. Many of my requests, of late, he has answered, and gives me liberty to plead for all I want. He has repeatedly refreshed my soul, and strengthened my hands, by hearing of the success of the gospel in various parts, and among various denominations, abroad and at home. O that a little one may become a thousand. These accounts, in our present awful situation, are peculiarly gratifying. I have also been refreshed by hearing of the steadfastness and prosperity of individuals, whose spiritual welfare I have at heart, especially ministers. My God still continues to teach me the useful lesson of living by faith, particularly as to sanctification; but it is a difficult lesson. In all I come short. Help me, Holy Father, to press on with renewed vigour; increase my faith; fill, yea fill with faith, and with the Holy Ghost.

May 23. Yet again I am permitted to render thanks to my God for his goodness, in allowing me to enter his gates frequently, and also to prove it good to be there: in comforting me in private by his word and his Spirit; disappointing my fears repeatedly, and strengthening me for what he called for from me. He still teaches me the necessity of living by faith, and gives me to feel, in a measure, the happy effects of it, by its

sweetly solemnizing my mind; it brings power into my soul, with comfort and sensible evidence of his work in me, more especially as it respects holiness. O, who can tell the value of faith!—Lord, increase it, and a power to live by it. I find I need more patience with myself. I am ashamed and grieved that I make so little, if any progress. These last eight days my mind has been pained on this account. I come so very far short of what I would be, and may be. Lord, remove the cause, and let the effects cease. O refresh my soul with a ceaseless shower of thy grace! I pant to live more to thee; to feel a more entire union with Deity; to have stronger and more constant testimony of thy Spirit, both from the witness and fruit of what thou hast done for me, and in me. I want every moment to be found in the work of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope; and to experience a greater equality of spirit, temper, and affection.

June 13. Again I am called to make known the loving-kindness of the Lord to his dust and ashes, and likewise to testify of my own shortcomings in all things. In general, since the 6th, I have been favoured with much sweet fellowship with God the Father. This, I have proved a source of delightful enjoyment, in the midst of various things that had a tendency to unhinge. I have had some stripping seasons. Felt poverty of spirit, and also proved the good effects of it, and of endeavouring to live by simple faith on these trying occasions. How pleasing to the

Lord, and how much countenanced by him! On Monday last, especially in the evening, I felt much weighed down from a sense of unfruitfulness and unfaithfulness, though surrounded with many privileges, that should produce every degree of spiritual prosperity. While I mused and mourned, God the Father and Son drew remarkably near, gave a glorious view, and likewise a taste of that nearness to, and full union with *Deity*, that is my privilege, and his will concerning me: that state of soul where

"Not a cloud doth arise to darken the skies,
Or hide for a moment the Lord from my eyes."

In short, it felt the most simple, and also the most pure state of enjoyment, that language can describe. O to feel it every moment!

July 4. Since the 27th of June, I have enjoyed much nearness to the Father, and sweet believing views of his work in my soul. I have also had severe and furious attacks from the powers of darkness; much weakness of body, with various trying exercises of mind; yet can truly say, in straits my God has been a present aid; disappointing my fears, and sometimes exceeding my expectations; perfecting his strength in my weakness, according to his promise; enabling me to strengthen the brethren, and to enjoy the privilege of the communion of saints; preserving, in seasons of danger, and giving opportunities for serving the interests of my fellow-creatures, both spiritual and temporal. But I have much cause to grieve for not profiting

more; for not making greater progress in the good way; for not bringing more glory to God; more profit and comfort to others. Truly I feel I am an unprofitable servant. The Lord *is God, not man;* therefore, he bears with me. O, my God, must I always make my moan! O hasten the time when thou shalt greatly enlarge my capacity to love, serve, and glorify thee.

August 7. Since the 25th July, it has been a time of close trial, both in body and mind. The fiery darts of the adversary have been very keenly pointed. Weakness of nerves and spirits have added to my painful feelings, and by all these things my joyous sensations have been very sensibly decreased. Faith in Jesus has been my only resource, with sweet views of God the Father, at times; who has set before me the many deliverances he has wrought for me in times past: and he who hath been with me in six troubles, will not forsake me in the seventh. Yet still I am distressed. I feel my spiritual poverty. Lord, undertake for me; and yet let me see thy loving-kindness in the land of the living. Fill with that faith, which

> "———pain and death defies,
> Most vigorous when the body dies."

Hezekiah's message from the prophet, who, by Divine command, desired him to set his house in order, for he must die, is often impressed on my mind. O that I may live to God while I live, and die to God when I die.

October 24. Yesterday, I returned from a journey south, for health. I have cause to praise the Lord, my healer, who gave much freedom from bodily complaints while from home; preservation of man and beast;—deliverance in danger;—often disappointed my fears;—gave sweet visits from on high;—communion of saints; hearing the gospel preached;—many opportunities for the spiritual and temporal good of my fellow-creatures;—supplied my temporal wants, and brought home in peace. He preserved all I left behind, and disappointed the evil designs of others against me in my absence. If they really meant evil, they were returning evil for good: in either case I would wish them well. The few trials I met with on the road, I was supported under; and soon, by prayer, delivered from. Since my return, the enemy has attempted in various ways to disturb my peace; but mine eyes are unto the Lord, and my daily cry is for more faith; and power, every moment, to conquer through it; with more of the fruit of the Spirit, and a clear testimony, by the witness of it, for sanctification. I find it difficult to live every moment by faith; yet, without this, I cannot continually realize the presence of God, and be all attention constantly to an indwelling Deity. I have been long learning this important lesson: but, O how little my progress, and how condescending my God, who still continues to teach me, and to bear with me! His goodness is inexpressible. The keen force of satanic tempta-

tion, of late, has borne hard upon me. O to be filled with that pure, perfect love, that casteth out all fear!

November 28. Since last date, my God has dealt so bountifully with me, and I feel so much of my own unworthiness and unfaithfulness, that I am not only lost in wonder, love, and praise, but also in confusion. I loathe myself when thus my God I see. He has condescended to allow me much sweet communion with himself, and with his dear Son; more especially since last Sabbath morning. I desired to meet my God, and truly I was not disappointed. Jehovah drew so remarkably nigh, as to arrest, as it were, not only the powers of my mind, but also of my body. The former was fixed in deep attention, with a penetrating consciousness of the Divine presence: the latter felt as almost immoveable, while an indescribable solemnity, and sweet serenity, overspread my mind. The Lord shone upon his word, and my soul. In his light I saw light. I found Jehovah is the pillar upon which my soul rests: his Name the strong tower into which I run and find safety and comfort. O that his goodness may be improved to the utmost, and returned in living, holy obedience. Since that time I have had lasting communion with him, though far short of what I want. The day following, he made my cup to run over, partly from a prospect of increasing usefulness, and partly by the countenance he gave upon its opening, by inclining others to unite in the attempt. O that the event may shew it is of God.

December 12. Still, through mercy, I can record the goodness of my God. On Sunday last, in public, from a sermon on "This is the will of God, even your *sanctification*," I enjoyed a precious time. The Lord shone on his work in my soul, and, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, I could clearly trace the effects of sanctification, both on the superior faculties of the soul,—the understanding, the will, conscience, and memory; and also on the inferior faculties, the passions;—including love, hatred, grief, joy, fear, desire, &c. &c.; likewise the appetites. I never remember to have had more evidence from the fruit of the Spirit than on this memorable occasion: so true is it, that we can only see light in God's light, or know the things freely given us of God.

LETTER LXXIV.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

February 5, 1794.

Having the favour of a frank for Mrs. C—, I gladly embrace the opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of dear Mrs. Johnson's valuable letter, dated Dec. 12, 1793. The contents of your letters are peculiarly suited to my spiritual appetite. I bless our gracious God, who deals so tenderly, so bountifully with you. I think you may say, though poor and feeble yourself,

"My Lord is all the world to me,
And all my soul is love."

O let us praise him for his unspeakable kindness.

Since my last, he has given me sweet communion with himself and his dear Son, through the Spirit, and increases it, drawing me nearer to Deity. The enemy has withstood me greatly; but my God lifts up a standard, and is near to me. I hope, in a small measure, I may say with De Renty, "I carry about with me an experimental verity, and" sometimes, "a plenitude of the presence of the Sacred Trinity." I do not know whether in my last I mentioned, that my God, some time ago, condescended to give me a glorious view of the *Holy Three;* which has continued ever since. O that while permitted to gaze at this grand object, I may be, a thousand times more than ever, changed into the Divine image. *This is* my *ardent desire,* that every manifestation may prove of an *assimilating* nature; that as far as humanity will admit, I may be all light, all life, all love, all deep humility. O what a soul-transporting thought, in the midst of present weakness, ignorance, and many humiliating circumstances, that yet a little while, and we shall drop this vile body, and be all like God; and dwell for ever with him, and with our adorable Jesus; and bask in the bright beams of redeeming love. When millions of millions of years shall be past and gone, still one vast eternity will be before us. Amazing, that dust and ashes should be thus honoured; It is mystery all! It is mercy boundless! Well, let the thoughts of

such astonishing bliss support and even raise us above every present pressure.

In the midst of all this great kindness, my God hath given me lately, a constant sense of my short-comings, of my spiritual poverty: this deeply pervades my whole soul; it is past expression. My only relief is in flying by faith to Jesus; there I bathe me in his bleeding side, and clothe me with his righteous robe, to cover my naked soul; and endeavour to believe, till faith brings in more love, &c.; till his Spirit sets his seal to the work wrought in me, notwithstanding my conscious emptiness; and thus I am strengthened by getting out of *self*.

My heart is so enlarged to the poor, especially the Lord's poor, that I am in danger of making myself poor. I find the more I am found in this labour of love, the more the Lord finds out ways and opportunities for it; and sometimes causes others, even the most unlikely, to assist me. O it is a sweet work, to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, &c. I should rather say, O it is sweet to act for my God; to give to the Lord, through the medium of his own poor precious people.

My mind is much tried as to public affairs. A wonderful spirit of prayer seems poured upon me, that our country, our gospel, &c. &c. may be preserved. I enjoy liberty in pleading, that we may not be given up into the hands of our enemies; but have no promise as yet. I tremble for the ark. How do you feel with regard to these

matters? Has Mr. H— arrived? The young man at Hope Chapel is doing well; things look better.

I have ventured to write freely to some of the preachers respecting the present appearances among them; which they forgive, and tell me, that the Lord is still doing great things in different places. Write me soon, and refresh my heart, and strengthen my hands; by prayer, in secret, and in your bands, and classes. O faithful prayer, what may not be done by it. An increase of every spiritual blessing be your portion; prays your friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXX.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

Rosemount, June 17, 1794.

Dear Mrs. Johnson is upon my mind daily at a throne of grace, but still an embargo has been laid upon my pen. What a mercy is the mutual benefit, by the exchange of a letter now and then, when our Almighty Friend graciously permits. O, who is a God like unto our God? Since I wrote last, I have experienced much of the Divine goodness—much indescribably sweet nearness to, and sinking into Jehovah: holy fellowship with the Father, and the Son, which sinks *self* into nothing. My God is ever with me: O how condescending! I can neither express, nor explain it, but it is well known to my friend. With all this, I am kept little and

poor, in my own eyes; experience many stripping seasons, and spring-tides of painful temptations from the powers of darkness. I believe these enlarge my receptive powers; for frequently, soon after, there is such an influx of Deity, such glorious displays of future glory, as fills with wonder, and love, and silent adoration. I find the truth of these words, "Israel shall dwell alone." I meet with few that understand my language; and if they did, I often find that words cannot convey an adequate idea of the work, and ways of the Lord, in these inner and higher walks of the Christian life. And, yet, I seem so far short of what the Lord often shews me is my privilege, in point of enjoyment, and conformity to the Divine image, that I feel ashamed; and grieve because my progress is so small. Help me to get forwards. I sometimes think, that the abstract of my life is a continual passing through the veil of outward things, and gasping to live more fully in God. I am kept in perpetual pursuit of higher attainments, that I may be capacitated to bring more glory to God, as well as to enjoy him more. How clearly is the grand prize set before me! Almost every morning my soul is fired and filled with a holy ambition, for the full possession of every purchased and promised blessing; but still, I do not attain; restless, resigned, I wait for it. I long now, to find words sufficiently plain to convince you, how poor, how unworthy, how unfruitful I am. The Lord knows it, and I feel it; yet cannot properly

describe it; but beg you will do me the justice to believe it.

I still feel much on account of public affairs; what adds to my suffering, is, the most piercing convictions of the astonishing long-suffering, patience, and goodness of the Lord. This penetrates my inmost soul, makes me blush and be ashamed, to entreat for our guilty land. I so feel the weight of the iniquity of us all; and have such views of his consummate wisdom, and boundless love, that I am silent before him; and sink into his will. Yet again, when I take a view of the distress of my fellow-countrymen; what we are exposed to, what variegated misery, &c. I again open my mouth, and plead much.* Prayer is poured forth in public, and private, and secret; great the exertions for the spread of the gospel at home and abroad; and the Lord is greatly reviving his work in some parts of England. These things lead me to think, he will not make an utter end of us; but chastise us in a measure.

I was led very remarkably to the appointing an hour of prayer, every morning, from seven to eight, to entreat the Lord for mercy, in the present painful crisis of church and state; I proposed it also to many, both clergy and private Christians, high and low; and they have most cordially engaged with me, to meet at a throne of grace in our several apartments. The Lord has given much liberty

* The Habeas Corpus act was suspended at this time in England.

hitherto to several. Will Mrs. J— give us the aid of her prayers, and mention it to some of her precious fellow-pilgrims?

How does the Lord's work prosper in your hands? Is peace yet restored to contending parties? We have sweet times here in the select band, and in the class which meets in my house. O how fully does Jehovah reveal himself in the latter!

If I can procure time, I will inclose a few lines to Miss R.: if not, tell her I will write her the first opportunity. This long epistle requires an apology. I forgot to say, that my daily petitions ascend that all your corporeal powers and mental faculties may be continued in vigour, till you are called hence. Believe me, with Christian regard, your fellow-pilgrim, &c. D. MAXWELL.

1795.

Diary and correspondence continued.

January 2. On a retrospect of the last year, I find much cause to say, God has dealt well and kindly with me. My receipts of mercy have been

many; for soul, body, and outward estate. At times, the intermediate space has been checkered with various trials: yet still I have been supported under them, and often delivered from them. My heart has been enlarged towards the poor in general, and to the household of faith more particularly; and my powers of supply have been increased. In the course of the year I have been much tried with one particularly painful exercise, which has seemed rather to weaken than strengthen my hands; but has been permitted for good reasons. The Lord has more sensibly than usual owned my attempts for his glory and the good of my fellow-creatures.—Agreeably to my request, he gave me a token for good on the last day of the year; but the first day was ushered in with more unexpected trials. May all be blessed! I am again called to rejoice on account of the great success of the gospel, more especially in Ireland. Lord, continue and increase it, and in many places!

March 13. Friday. Still I have to acknowledge the receipt of mercies, spiritual and temporal. On Sabbath last, I found it good to wait on God in public. From the text, Revelation iii. 2, 3, I was led to examine if I had lost ground; if I had fallen from my first love. In the presence of the Searcher of hearts, I found liberty to conclude I had not; on the contrary, my love was more matured; my knowledge of God, and of the things of God, sensibly increased; my nearness to Deity greater; the manifestations of his

love and power more frequent; and my power to confess and act for him, his cause, and people, sensibly increased. But still I felt cause to lament that I had not been more faithful, more fruitful, and also to admire the long suffering patience of my God towards me. Found Christian fellowship on last Sabbath strengthening, and still more so on Tuesday evening; and, on Thursday morning the communion of saints was, of a truth, most refreshing. Jehovah appeared clear to the eye of faith, and his presence was most sensibly experienced by those present. I felt increasing power to mention his great and condescending kindness to me, to those that feared his name. I bless him, he is daily teaching me lessons of faith and love, and helping me to improve them to the utmost. He gives me many sweet proofs that he is the hearer of prayer, and in many instances disappoints my fears, and gives many opportunities of acting for him, both by more immediately promoting his cause, and more remotely assisting his people.

April 3. Friday. Through the tender mercy of my God I have continued to enjoy a measure of the blessing bestowed on Monday week. On Sunday last, in the morning, in public, the Lord comforted me by his smiles and presence during a lecture from the 29th, 30th, and 31st verses of the 11th chapter of Hebrews, especially the 31st. He also gave me comfortable seasons in secret prayer. Having several difficult services and duties to perform in the course of the past eight days, I was enabled to trust in the Lord, and he

helped me, and brought me through them all: though not so as to please *myself*, yet so as to gain the *acceptance* of those for whom they were designed. I may say, in some sense, with the Psalmist, through my God I leap over walls, and overcome troops. He gives me to *see* and *feel* how feeble and weak I am; how inadequate to any exertion; and yet, he brings me through many difficulties: and, had I stronger faith, I should see greater things than these. Lord, increase my faith! This last week he has given me a *most unexpected* opportunity of serving his cause: O that he may sensibly countenance the attempt! Have been more tempted for some days past than usual, from a quarter that pains me. I see the cloven foot:—give, Lord, the victory, and thine shall be the glory! I am *too outward*. I have need to pray to be more constantly religiously recollected; more attentive to an indwelling God; every moment realizing his presence. O my God, do these things for me, that I may glorify thee more; may profit others, and enjoy more constant communion with Deity in my own soul. Still prospects are gloomy respecting public affairs; but since last date, I have had the comfort of a spirit of prayer. Meetings for prayer are prevailing in many parts of America, among various denominations, who are all heartily uniting in supplicating a throne of grace for mercy in these troublesome and perilous times; also in Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c. &c. The Lord hear and answer in mercy!

June 26. He that is rich in mercy hath dealt with a bountiful hand towards me since last date. On Saturday last, in the morning, while by the way, my Jesus felt delightfully nigh; my views of him, and my relation to him, clear. In the evening, when in social prayer, Jehovah seemed to fill the place with his presence. In a moment I felt wrapped up in Deity! all around was God! and all within confest his nearness! I enjoyed much sweet liberty in pleading with him. On Sabbath, enjoyed the privilege of his house, and afterwards the communion of saints. On Monday, when with others, in an unexpected moment, again Jehovah broke in upon my soul, and I felt swallowed up in a penetrating sense of the Divine presence; lost in wonder. O that these frequent manifestations may answer great purposes! My soul breathes for this, and for their continuance! at least, for a permanent power to endure, every moment, as seeing the Invisible: for uninterrupted fellowship with the Sacred Three, so far as fallen nature will permit. On Thursday, was favoured with greater privileges than was expected, which also required greater exertion than usual; but my God carried me through, though not with so much comfort as on some similar occasions. But if he is glorified, and his creatures profited, I am satisfied. Upon the whole, I hope I get nearer to God: but have much to bear from myself. My soul thirsts for a more enlarged sphere of usefulness, and greater faithfulness in that I move in at present. I want

stronger evidences of sanctification, both from the fruit and witness of the Spirit; and more *equality* of *spirit, temper,* and *affection.*

—— 28. Friday and Saturday last were days of unusual languor. I felt unable for any vigorous exertion, either of faith or works; and was pained thereby and humbled. In these trying seasons, I avoid all *examination* and *reasoning.* The *latter* I have been much freed from, since I tasted the pure love of God. I prove the frequent actings of *simple faith* the most profitable exercise of mind at these times. On Sunday, a happy change took place. I was in a very peculiar degree in the spirit on the Lord's day, and tasted largely of the good word of God, and felt, in the most lively manner, the powers of the world to come, from the time I entered the house of God. The words of the second hymn led me involuntarily to self-examination, when the Lord seemed to bring to my remembrance the whole of his dealings with me in the work of conversion. He shewed me that I had not rested in the drawings of the Father, but followed with a heart sincere while under them; clearly pointed out the time, and place, when he first gave me a sense of his forgiving love; and afterwards made me a happy partaker of his pure love. Not that these memorable seasons had ever been forgotten by me; no, while memory lasts, they will ever be deeply engraven on it: but I found this a corroborating evidence of the truth of the Lord's work in my soul; more especially from the

beginning of an exposition on 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th verses of the 24th psalm. Jehovah seemed to fill the place with such a solemn sense of his presence, as penetrated my inmost soul; and arrested not only the powers of the mind, but of the body: all was *still*, and *all* confessed, *God is here*. No actings of faith seemed necessary on my part. For the time, faith seemed lost in enjoyment: not in *ecstatic joy*; but solemn awe, and silent love; both which, in a peculiar manner, mark all my interviews with *Jehovah*. Towards the close, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, made me equally sensible of their presence: the undivided Trinity seemed to overshadow me; and I had a clearer view of the personality of the Holy Ghost than for some time past. Except on these remarkable occasions when he is thus set before me, I am generally led to view him as the Divine Agent in man's salvation; who, from time to time, takes of the things of Christ, and shews them unto his people as his peculiar office. This most remarkable manifestation continued all the day, and through mercy to the present moment: only with this difference, that my fellowship is still more with the Father himself. My great desire is to prove the transforming influence of these gracious visits; and I am aware, also, how requisite, how necessary it is to double my guard by watching and prayer; lest the arch adversary gain any advantage over me, and I should grieve the Holy Spirit. Lord, assist me, and make me grateful.

July 10. Still my God continues to do me good, and visits, I trust, *for that purpose*, alternately with joys and sorrows. The former comforts and supports; the latter empties of *self*, as it respects *confidence* and *complacency*; and thereby fits the soul for greater discoveries of the love of God, through the gospel channel, without the danger of spiritual pride; and leads, by a blessing, to the transforming influence of these merciful visitations. Yet, exclusive of powerful renewals of them, how soon does a *lively sense* of the most lively manifestations of Divine love die away: how much am I then indebted to a gracious God, for so frequently repeating them. Lord, what can I render to thee! O enable me to render myself more unreservedly to thy honour, and glory, and cause; and enlarge my temporal borders for this purpose. On Sunday last, my God exerted his power in my behalf, out of weakness made me strong, and carried me a considerable way from here to commemorate the dying love of Jesus; *where* and *when* as much of the Divine goodness was allowed me, as the body would permit. Soon after was visited with bodily affliction, which threatened to be severe; but the progress of the disease was soon checked, by Him, who hath all things in the natural, moral, and religious world under his control. Though my pain was great, and my mind much flattened by it, yet I did not lose a sense of what the Lord had bestowed on me on his own day, neither have I to the present

moment. My heart's desire is, the sanctified use of every dispensation; with a will still more swallowed up in the Divine will. I have to record, to the glory of my God, and his condescending goodness, that he has done away the unexpected trials mentioned formerly, and given me my desire respecting the subjects of them. Truly, "it is better to trust in the Lord than in princes." O my God, continue and increase thy goodness; quicken my powers; give still stronger evidence of thy purifying love; more power to live by faith; and cordially to embrace all thy will.

LETTER LXXXI.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

July 11, 1785.

Your letters, Rev. Sir, are always welcome; but your last I received with peculiar satisfaction; fearing, though conscious of the purity of my intention, that my last had either offended, or grieved. I sincerely thank you, for taking in a Christian spirit what I took the liberty of suggesting. My conscience bears me witness, I have no desire in this painful business, but that light may be given to discover the will of God; and power and inclination to walk in it. The work is his; and I believe the workers are all his also, and all aim at the *same mark;* the glory of their Divine Master, and the good of precious souls: though their views, as to the best method

of securing these great ends, are different. I used to be partial to the old plan, of communicating in the church; and thought, that being no distinct body, but ready to assist all parties, was the way the Lord owned, and the most likely for extensive usefulness. I believe this was Mr. Wesley's judgement also; and that he ever in *any measure* departed from it, was, I believe, in consequence of his *original design*, of *following the openings of Providence*. And, could this be always clearly known, and embraced in a spirit of love, all would be well. Love will prove a strong cement to unite the whole body; and if, in particular places, circumstances make it expedient to differ from the general plan with respect to giving the sacrament, &c. still there will be no breach; all may *love* alike, though they do not *act* in every tittle alike. But I forbear, and would conclude by saying, through mercy I enjoy sweet inward liberty, having no party feelings, but earnestly desiring the will of God; the union of preachers; and great success in the work assigned to each, I would trust, by their great Master.

I pray that you may meet in a spirit of love; continue in it, during the discussion of many important points; and depart in it, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

It was with peculiar satisfaction I received your accounts of the prosperity of the work. May it increase with all the increase of God; and a larger share of it be your portion, as a

proof to all that the Lord is with you. I shall be anxious, if you can spare a minute, to inform me how matters have gone. I trust the sound of division or discord shall not wound my ear.

I must add, (as I always write freely to you) my obligations to redeeming love increase; my fellowship with the Father, of late, is particularly deep, and sweet: and from time to time I am favoured with remarkable manifestations of Divine love. Do let me know how to improve them to the utmost; how to grow up into Christ my living Head more rapidly. The more I live by simple faith, the clearer is the witness for purity of heart. At present, I feel becalmed in the ocean of redeeming love. Lately, I have been much tried, tempted, and variously exercised. But even then, O how graciously nigh was my God; making even my enemies at peace with me. His goodness beggars all expression.

But lest I be tedious, as your time is much occupied, I will conclude. No remarkable increase here. Mr. B— is useful to individuals, and much liked. Messrs. C— and E—, if removed, will I hope be succeeded by those suited to the place. Wishing Mr. M— an increase of every purchased and promised blessing, I remain, his well-wisher in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.*

* The above letter shews the solicitude felt by Lady Maxwell for the welfare of that body of Christians to which she was united, at a time, when the discussion of certain points of discipline, threatened, for a short season, to disturb the peace and unity of the Connexion.

LETTER LXXXII.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

Oct. 19, 1795.

I have long wished to hear from Mrs. Johnson, and at times, when in secret, before the Lord, have been led to think she was under the rod. His Spirit has enabled me to plead for her, as thus situated; and by recent accounts from Mrs. C—, I find my apprehensions were just. Your God, as formerly, I doubt not has been with you in the furnace; to support, to comfort, and to make you sing of mercy, as well as judgement. Perhaps you will not thank me for saying, that I hope the Lord will keep you a little longer in this vale of tears, and give you to see yet more of the fruit of your labours, for his Name's sake. By your last, some months ago, it appeared, he was enlarging your sphere of usefulness; I hope it is still the case.

Much praise is due to the Father of Mercies, for the *peace* and *union* he has *restored* to our Zion; it is his own doing, and may well be marvellous in our eyes. O that the happy fruits of it may more and more appear. During the long and painful agitation, my mind was kept in peace, free from prejudice, and undue warmth; endeavouring to commit both parties to him, that both might be led into his holy will. And, O, how graciously hath he dealt with both: surely he heareth prayer. Deep and sweet has been my fellowship with the Sacred Three since

I last wrote, but more especially with God the Father; rich and frequent the discoveries of his love, *his perfect love*. The teachings of his Spirit, and humbling views of *self*, have been very clear; and he seemed to empty, in order to fill. I prove these stripping times very favourable to a life of *simple faith*. Eternity will not be too long wherein to praise my God, for the lessons he hath taught me, respecting this great duty and privilege of living by faith. Great are its effects; but I am slow in learning the lessons of his grace, though he condescends to give line upon line, and precept upon precept. Sweet has been my enjoyment, and many my advantages, in being taught to put in practice the lessons he has taught me of *trusting in him*, in every situation; but especially in difficult cases. He *has*, and *does* point out my way; giving me to hear, as it were, a voice, (though no articulate sound) "This is the way, walk ye in it:" so strong has been the notice upon my mind, of the path of duty. He is indeed a soul-satisfying portion; *he is my God and my all*. But though thus blessed at times, I have seasons of close trial; the combined powers of darkness seem engaged against me, while there appears no power *in me* to combat such powerful foes; such an army of aliens: yet simply looking to Jesus by faith, endeavouring to trust in the Lord my God, abstracted from creature; looking above them, I am supported. I am delivered so evidently by the arm, not of flesh, but of *Jehovah himself*,

that nothing is left me wherein to glory. I am sweetly constrained to give the glory where alone it is due. I have admired the goodness of my God of late, that even in the heat of battle, he hath made my evidences of his pure love strong, even to meridian brightness; much more so than when there was peace in all my borders. This appeared the more remarkable to me, because I always seemed to be sensible of a deficiency on such occasions.

For a week or two past, I have felt a degree of heaviness, through manifold temptations; but by quietly trusting in the Lord, and avoiding all hasty conclusions, he has given me clearly to see that his work is going on in my soul. To him I would leave the way and manner. My soul uniformly desires the prosperity of Zion; it seems my meat and drink to promote it; and he, in his adorable Providence, still opens many unexpected ways, and shines on my feeble attempts.

But I have been particularly tried lately by the loss of a young man, who has been of great use to me. He taught my week-day School, consisting of fifty children; and superintended my Sunday School, in which there are at present upwards of sixty young men, remarkably alive to God; and many young women, truly desirous to flee from the wrath to come. Many hundreds also flocked to hear him on the Lord's-day evening, to whom he appeared greatly blessed. But he, and many others, thought the light shone clear for his going to Sierra Leone as a Mis-

sionary, Do pray for a successor according to God's own heart; and that my poor labours may be increased, and my own soul greatly blessed.

Remember me kindly to Miss Ritchie. I have long expected to hear from her. Wishing you a still deeper acquaintance with the Sacred Three; still more power to glorify him who liveth for ever; and an interest in your prayers that I may wax stronger and stronger, "sink deeper and rise higher;" and with my prayers for the prosperity of your Society; and Christian respects to Mrs. Coleand Atmore; I am, dear Mrs. Johnson's friend in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

1796.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

January 5, Friday. Still I find cause to make mention of the loving-kindness of the Lord. Since last Friday, my God has, in various ways, shown me his goodness. On Sunday last, I was permitted to shew forth the death of Jesus, when he spoke to my heart by his servant. He has allowed some sweet seasons in secret prayer, with much of the communion of saints. Yesterday, as he often does on that day, he was remarkably gracious when with a few of his chil-

dren in social prayer. Jesus drew sweetly and most sensibly nigh: O how glorious did he appear to the eye of faith! how altogether lovely! How irresistably attractive his love! Through him, I had access to Jehovah, whose Divine presence I as sensibly felt; but it was in all the dignity of God the Father, which solemnized my mind, and filled with sacred awe, so that I rejoiced with deep reverence. This distinction, in the manifestation of Divine love proceeding more immediately from Jehovah himself, uniformly marks all the intercourse I am privileged to enjoy with him. I pant for power to improve it more, by earnest prayer. I feel as if hitherto I had asked nothing, while the Lord seems to say, "Ask, and receive, that your joy may be full." Through mercy, I am still kept as in the dust. My views of *self* truly humbling; and I am still desirous of lying lower, as preparatory to larger attainments in the Divine life. My evidences of sanctification have not been so clear. I have been resting too much in present enjoyment; but the Lord calls on me to press forward. I get more extensive views of entire devotion of heart and life. Help me, Holy Father, to attain. I am drawn to a greater and more constant realizing of the Divine presence, and to an enduring as seeing him who is invisible.

March 25, Friday. I have nothing to say for myself, if it is not to confess and mourn over my short-comings. I feel it painful to have this so often to repeat; but so it is. O my God, shall

I ever live at this poor dying rate: forbid it, gracious Lord. Let a stroke of Omnipotence set me free, from this inability to live up to my privileges. I would, with thy servant of old, be able to say, though "of myself I can do nothing, through Christ strengthening me, I can do all things." Hasten, Holy Father, the happy time.

Had again another opportunity of renewing my engagement to be the Lord's, at his own table, on Sunday last; where he was gracious. When joining the congregation, in that delightful part of public worship, singing the praise of God, the great Master of the gospel-feast came down in the power of his Spirit. Jesus felt nigh, and very precious, during a sermon from the 5th and 6th verses of the 53d chapter of Isaiah. God the Father also condescended to visit with a sweet sense of his presence. My inmost soul felt pierced with deep astonishment at the height and depth of redeeming love. It seemed a mystery, my limited understanding could not comprehend, and, indeed, how should *finite* minds fully understand the doings of an *Infinite* Being. I bless the Lord, who has given me to *believe* and *taste* of redeeming love, which is more necessary; and daily to thirst after an increase. On the whole, it was a most solemn time, and I hope, profitable. On Monday had a sweet visit from the adorable Son of God, when at a throne of grace. In the evening, a spirit of prayer seemed to rest on me while joining with a few living souls; some of whom were wrestling with the

Lord, in all the power of prayer, in behalf of all present, of the work of God, and for the best interests of mankind in general. Jehovah came down; my whole soul confessed a present God. O why do not these precious manifestations, so often repeated, prove of a more transforming nature. O my God, remove the cause, that I may praise thee. The Lord has granted another of my requests, since last date; and one more seems in a good train. Surely he heareth the cries of his children. O my God, remember especially *one* of these still unanswered; it is well known to thee, with *the* necessity of it. Let me have cause to praise thee for a favourable answer to it before I again take up my pen.

April 8, Friday. Again I take up my pen, and though I have mercy to record, still I feel cause to mourn. For some weeks, I seem to have been brought into straits, that I might see a display and breaking forth of the glory of my God afresh. For *this* I have waited, and looked, and prayed; but still his chariot wheels delay. At times, I must own there has been something of this kind; but it was not lasting. Yesterday, for a few minutes, I prayed to him as circumstances would permit, and of a truth he quickly answered; prayer brought him down; in a moment he was nigh; and I felt, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." A song of praise was put in my mouth: it seemed as if I was on holy ground. A reverential awe, sweetly tempered with love, rested upon me. The Second

Person in the adorable Trinity also visited me, and brought with him a heaven of love. I felt as if Deity was present, and passing quickly by me; yet leaving the Divine impress behind. My mouth was opened, I was saved from sterility of thought, and barrenness of expression, and I made mention of the loving-kindness of the Lord: when he is nigh, every mountain flows down, and streams break out in the desert. On Sabbath morning last, also, in public, I felt a lively, deep, solemn sense of the presence of Jehovah; it seemed to arrest all the powers of my mind; but it is something still greater, and permanent, that I look and long for. Strongly impressed with the necessity of constant prayer, I would be pouring out my heart continually; yet often when I bow my knee, all my kindling ardours die away; and at night, have the mortification to find another day gone, and little gained: I feel bowed down on these accounts. Shall my desires always so far outstrip my attainments? O my Father, let it not be. In temporal concerns, *desire* is termed the hectic of the fool; but not so surely in spiritual matters. Convince me, O thou Hearer of prayer, that it is not.

September 30, Friday. Since my last, my joys and comforts have run in a low channel. At times, when calling to remembrance the goodness of my God, immediate comfort has sprung up in my heart; but it has not long continued. Temptations have not been wanting, to call in question what was spoken from on high. It

has been asked, "Has the Lord indeed said so?" This hath been the manner of the grand adversary of God's people from the beginning. Lord, counteract all his malicious designs against me, and enable me to rise superior to them all. Upon the whole, since Saturday last, I have felt much languor of spirit, which grieves me; yet my God hath given me victory, sensible victory, in some cases, and I look for more. I have felt much the want of a wrestling spirit in secret prayer; yet have proved it good to wait on the Lord in that exercise. I have been in heaviness through manifold temptations, and some perplexities. I feel we are come to a most eventful period. Great events seem in the womb of Providence; prospects are dark as to some things, and cheering as to others: Judgement seems at hand. And yet the right hand of the Lord is in appearance made bare, in the conversion of sinners in many places; in a growing spirit of prayer poured on multitudes; and the hearts of thousands are stirred up, to seek the conversion of heathen nations; while a spirit of inquiry seems resting on many of God's ancient people; with other appearances that would lead to hope, the time for their return is drawing nigh. Lord, thou knowest all things, and sittest at the helm of affairs, with the reins of providential government in thy hands: this is matter of solid comfort to thy people. O shine more fully on the soul of thy handmaid, and enable her in every situation so to trust in thee, as to be kept in perfect peace.

Have mercy on our sinful island, seemingly ripe for judgements. Help, Lord, for the glory of thy name.

October 28, Friday. My God has been gracious since last date. On Sabbath last, the word preached in the morning, from Rev. xx. 12, he made a word of consolation, of quickening, of instruction: Deity felt very nigh. By faith, I had such a realizing view of the triumphant entry of the Lord Jesus into heaven upon his ascension, after having finished his great work in the redemption of mankind, as astonished me. Lord, make it profitable. On Monday evening, in my way to the house of the Lord, *God the Father* so manifested himself to me, as I can no ways express. For a moment, I started back, fearing it might prove a prelude to great sufferings; but soon recovered, and still, when I look up to him he feels at hand. How is it, Lord, that I do not make greater progress? Thou art good, and my soul pants after the full possession of every new-covenant blessing. O Lord, transform me more fully into the Divine image; and let thy Spirit witness with mine that I do love thee with all my heart. O fill me with the fruit of the Spirit, and make me much more useful to thy church and people. Thou knowest I esteem this my highest honour, and richest privilege. I fear living a useless life: forbid it, Lord. I deeply feel my short-comings, let me not always make my moan: put a song in my mouth, and enable me every moment to live by faith upon thy Son. Without him, I can do nothing. The tide of satanical temptation has

not run so high this last eight days. May patience have its perfect work in every trying time.

December 30. In the course of Providence, I am brought now very near the close of another year. O that every revolving season may find me improved and advanced in the Divine life. I would hope, in some degree, they meet me most sincerely aiming at this; and that, though slowly, they find me in motion. Greatly quicken it, gracious Lord. Yesterday my God gave me a token for good. In the midst of hurry, he drew unexpectedly near, and spread a heavenly tranquillity through my mind; and just after, opened my mouth remarkably in conversation with one of his own ministering saints, upon the rich privileges of the Christian, even in this life. Soon after, when with three of his ministering servants, in the course of prayer, praise, and Christian conference, he renewed the view of the Sacred Trinity given me last week, and we all found it good to wait on God. After dinner, I found much liberty of speech, on the peculiar enjoyments of the Lord's people who live up to their privileges; those of them that are taught from on high to live by simple faith on the Son of God. Lord, teach me this important lesson more fully. Still I am kept in constant pursuit of higher attainments in the Divine life. Do, Holy Father, give them, and cause me also to sink lower in my own eyes, and to rise higher and get nearer to thee. In general, the great object of entire devotion is set before me every

morning, and strongly thirsted after: but O, how slowly do I move, and through what a crowd of hinderances. Through the day, was kept in the midst of trial, and made thankful for it. Evermore, Lord, make manifest thy strength in my weakness.

LETTER LXXXIII.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

June 28, 1796.

After a long interval, I had the satisfaction to receive dear Miss Ritchie's letter, the end of April. I had no design to drop the correspondence, and am pleased that an opportunity now opens for renewing it, though my situation does not always admit of these regular returns I could wish. Since I wrote last, my obligations to redeeming Love have been greatly increased. In vain would I attempt to enumerate them; they are, indeed, more than the hairs of my head. Time would fail to tell of the numberless manifestations of Divine love and power. I have, though deeply unworthy, been favoured with such wonderful lettings into Deity, as no language can describe or explain: but the whole soul dilates itself in the exquisite enjoyment; so refined, so pure, so tempered with sacred awe, so guarded by heavenly solemnity, as effectually to prevent all irregularity of desires: these, with every power of the mind, bow in holy subjection

before Jehovah. Surely the feelings of the soul, on these memorable occasions, are nearly similar to those enjoyed by the heavenly inhabitants. I have it still to remark, that all my intercourse with *God the Father* is strongly marked with that superior solemnity and awe, which lays and keeps the soul in the dust, yet raises it to that holy dignity which flows from a consciousness of union with Deity: and love matured, makes it the willing servant of all for Christ's sake.

My full heart could say much on this delightful subject, but necessary calls to various duties oblige me to abridge my views and experience of these deep things of God. What follows must be a short abstract. In the course of a few years past, I have made sensible progress in *self-knowledge;* learned not only the depth of the fall, but the universality of its effects upon every power of the human mind. These have been humbling, but profitable lessons, and have proved preparatory to larger measures of grace. More especially to that near and dear fellowship with Jehovah, which he has condescended to allow me for some considerable time. During this period he has also stooped to teach me largely of the nature of simple faith; how necessary to stability in the ways of God; how requisite for uninterrupted communion with heaven; how pleasing to Jehovah; how effectual in counteracting the malicious designs and subtle devices of the great adversary of man; how powerful to support the soul, when called to combat with the combined powers of

darkness, in the absence of heavenly joys, which otherwise would have sunk it into the mire of evil reasoning. Too much cannot be said of this wonder-working principle. Yet, I am well aware that it has no intrinsic value of itself, but only as it stands connected with its great object, the Lord Jesus Christ. The farther I go in the Divine life, the more enlarged are my views of the Christian privileges, so that I am constrained to forget the things that are behind. I herein see the wisdom and goodness of my God, who thus prevents the danger of sinking too deep into present enjoyment. My whole soul says, he doth all things well. It is almost impossible to say, how far I find myself behind, both in Christian experience, and also in activity in the ways and cause of God: though my heart beats high for a more enlarged sphere of usefulness, and much more fidelity in the one in which I now move.

The Lord, I see, is still dealing very graciously with Miss R. How profitable are trials! She proves this, and also enjoys the peculiar comforts that are allowed under the cross, while both are improved for the glory of her God, and the profit of her fellow-creatures. There is a wide field for this in Bristol, and its environs. I hope the conciliating measures and manners of Mrs. J. and yourself will, by the blessing of the Most High, greatly promote Christian love and union among the Lord's people.

Please give Christian love and best wishes to Mrs. J. with Christian respects to Mrs. Cole and

Address. I wish also to be remembered to Mr. and Mrs. B. and the many precious souls I had the privilege of being acquainted with at Bristol. I should be happy to hear that every dispute was lost in love, and the work of the Lord prospering greatly: then they would willingly grant me the aid of their warmest addresses at a throne of grace for my rapid progress in the ways of God. I never esteemed an interest in the prayers of the Lord's people so highly as now.

Many interruptions have caused numberless inaccuracies in this tedious epistle; all which, I doubt not, will be overlooked by Miss Ritchie, whose friend I subscribe myself, with Christian love,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXXIV.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

July 11, 1796.

I meant, long before now, to have told you, that it was with satisfaction I perceived you had taken up your pen in defence of that important branch of doctrine and experience, so little known by many Christians, and experienced by fewer, *entire sanctification*. Is the small manuscript treatise upon that subject, a sight of which you favoured me with some years ago, never to see the light? I wish you would go forwards in the strength of the Lord, and furnish us with a little volume; complete, both as to doctrine and experience. It

would, at least, be strengthening to those whose minds have been so far enlightened as to believe the former, and enjoy the latter, in a small measure. It might also, by the blessing of the Lord, be very useful in removing prejudices from the minds of honest, though ignorant inquirers; and make the precious truth more extensively known. Hitherto its boundaries are within the line of Methodism; and, alas! how partially received even there. But there is reason to believe, the time hastens on when this line shall be stretched over the Christian world. Hail, auspicious day! Let me entreat you, dear Sir, to exert all your powers to embalm this *precious truth*. Perhaps there are not many preachers in the connexion so much master of the subject. It will be rendering an essential service to the Christian world in general, and to the Methodist connexion in particular. But I forbear: in this and all other matters, may you be taught of *God himself*.

With respect to myself, I am still enabled to testify of the goodness of the Lord. My fellowship with *Jehovah* is most sensibly increased of late. At times, I am favoured with such lettings into Deity, as far exceeds my barren powers of expression. I do not feel sterility of thought so much, for the Lord condescends to give such glorious views of the Christian privileges, and by the light of a luminous faith enables me so to realize future and unseen things, as I sometimes think is surely akin to the beatific vision. O what heights and depths I see before me! What, as yet unex-

perienced, degrees of nearness to, and close walking with, and rich enjoyment of, the Sacred Three! but more especially with *Jehovah*. I feel such a sinking into him—such a conscious union with him, as lays me in the dust before him, and keeps me there. I never had, till of late, such piercing convictions of my *nothingness*. Language fails to express what I feel of this; and I suppose it must increase, as I get nearer to the *Fountain-head*: till I am swallowed up, and lost, in the Ocean of pure love. In the mean time, all my powers seem gathered up and centered in God, who allows me a holy familiarity with himself, that stamps a conscious dignity upon the soul, and seems to fit me for *present* duty, however above my natural abilities. This assistance is afforded in a way that proves its Divine origin; keeps me little in my own eyes; disposed to give the glory where alone it is due. I do reap still much benefit from living by simple faith; it, indeed, brings "Deep peace and present power."

I have to remark now, more than ever, the fulness of the Divine presence in our little class-meeting here; and something still more remarkable, (as there is often only myself, and sometimes two or three preachers,) there is for the time an uncommon power given me to express my own experience. I seem carried above my own words, thoughts, and above my whole self, upon the subject of entire devotion. In my little way, on these occasions, my experience is much upon that subject. I have thought this must be

for others. If I can throw in even a mite into the Divine treasury, I shall esteem it a peculiar privilege. I pray that you may all meet in the spirit of love and forbearance at the Conference, and that the *Almighty fiat* may sanction your every determination: then, all will be just as it should be. Wishing you much more than ever of the Divine presence, and a still fuller testimony of the destruction of the bitter root, with the sealing of the Spirit unto redemption's day; I am, Rev. Sir, in Christian bonds, your faithful, humble servant, D. MAXWELL.

1797.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

February 24, Friday. Still I live, because my God is good. In the course of these eight days, I have at times been rather depressed, on account of unfruitfulness. I would be all for God. Every nerve strung with holy ardour of desire to promote his cause upon earth; and yet I seem to do nothing. Lord, if it is thy will, enlarge

my sphere, and make me more faithful in the present narrow one in which I move. Thou knowest every particular in my present situation, and what my hindrances are, and can easily remove them. The perilous situation of our land occupies many of my thoughts and words, both to God and man. Matters seem now to draw to a painful crisis. Blessed God, interpose! undertake our cause; and, if not contrary to thy will, and derogatory to thy glory, yet spare; and let the bitter cup pass from us, at least for a season. O hear the unceasing prayers and supplications that are ascending from every quarter; in public, private, and secret. Thou hast often, in former days, appeared remarkably for our sinful island. Thou changest not. If our cup of iniquity is not already full, O, gracious Lord, yet assist us in our extremity! If it is, O spare thy own people;—cover their heads,—hide them in the hollow of thy hand! Speak, Lord, for the glory of thy Name.

March 3, Friday. I have some reason to believe that the Lord has heard, and answered, since last date. He has put work in my hand I did not expect, and owned me in it, after convincing me deeply of unfruitfulness. Last week I had a particular call in Providence, not only to arise myself, and pray for our guilty land, but to urge others to join me in the important work of intercession. This call the Lord has so owned as to leave not a shadow of doubt that it came from himself. He has inclined many to unite in the

sacred work; favoured with much liberty at a throne of grace; great comfort has been experienced by some; together with such a strong stimulus to prayer, as has not often been found on former occasions; all which, gives encouragement to believe, solid good will be the result. Grant it, gracious Lord, for thy Name's sake: and though the beginning is small, let it greatly increase.

—— 10, Friday. Since the 3d instant, the Lord of heaven and earth, whom winds and waves obey; who giveth victory, or defeat, by sea or land, as he sees meet; hath appeared signally in our behalf, guilty as we are. O how blind are those who do not see, that the hand of God, and not superior seamanship, is the grand cause, that 15 sail of British ships, should overcome the Spanish fleet, consisting of 27. Not only capturing two first-rates of 112 guns each, and two others, one of 80, and one of 70 guns, but also greatly damaging several others; and thereby preventing their junction with the French and Dutch fleets, who avowedly owned their design of invading our little Island. O, Lord, it is *thy doing*, and may well be wondrous in our eyes: therefore, to Thee be all the glory, to whom alone it is due.* Surely prayer has been heard. O may

* This brilliant victory was obtained under the command of Sir John Jervis, off Cape St. Vincent, on the 14th of the preceding month; and acquired for the British Admiral the appropriate title of Earl St. Vincent.

Vide *Baine's History of the War*, b. ii. ch. 1. p. 181.

we all be thankful and humble! and do thou, O Lord, grant thy blessing, and hear the prayers offered up. Regard our late attempts to humble ourselves by confession on the last day set apart as a national fast for Scotland; and own a neighbouring nation, this day employed in the like solemn exercises. If possible, yet save us for thy Name's sake. Great was also the goodness of our God in defeating the attempt of a descent upon Ireland some months ago; even after part of the enemy's forces were landed. He caused the wind to blow, that scattered their fleet, and obliged them to return to port greatly damaged.*

* This gracious interposition of Providence deserves to be further noticed. "The republican government of France, perceiving a crisis in the situation of Ireland more favourable to the success of an invasion than any which had occurred since the French revolution, seized that occasion to strike a blow of no common importance. Fifteen thousand chosen troops, under the command of Hoche, were embarked at Brest, on the 15th December, 1796; intended to act on their arrival with a body of the disaffected Irish, who were known to be considerable in numbers, and organized for insurrection by chiefs of talents and intrepidity. Every thing being prepared, Admiral Villaret Joyeuse set sail from Brest, with eighteen sail of the line, besides frigates and transports, while the General embarked with his staff on board the frigate La Fraternité. The wind, at first, was favourable; but scarcely had the expedition left the outer harbour, when a storm arose which dispersed the fleet, and separating the frigate which carried Hoche, obliged him to escape into the harbour of Rochelle, after weathering a dangerous cruise, and being chased by two British vessels. Of the whole fleet, only eight two-deckers

How wonderful is his goodness to His unworthy creatures! O let it prove salvation to us! Neither would we forget His recent appearance for us in Wales, when He caused 1200 troops, who had made good a landing on that coast, to lay down their arms, and surrender themselves as prisoners of war, when only opposed by the militia and the country people, rising in a mass against them. How easily, if not prevented by the God of battles, might the enemy have overcome. O Lord, may these memorable instances of thy goodness to us, be written in indelible characters upon our hearts; and appear in our lives, by universal obedience to thy commands. Without this thorough reformation, by the faith of the gospel, though the fatal blow may be suspended for a season, it must take place; and, we may fear, with double severity, after having rendered ourselves doubly guilty, by resisting every effort made for our deliverance.

April 14. Sabbath last, I was glad to go to the house of God in the morning, though my expectations were not fully answered. On coming home soon after, I went to prayer with a Chris-

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reached the coast of Ireland, under Admiral Bouvet, who appeared off Bantry Bay, but was forced from that situation in a few days by tempestuous weather, and obliged to return to France, without effecting a landing. In this disastrous expedition, the French lost not less than three ships of the line, and three frigates, from the adverse elements."

Baine's History of the War, b. i. ch. 22, p. 167.

tian friend, without any enlarged expectations. Yet my gracious God and Father broke into my soul in a wonderful manner; and so clearly appeared to the eye of faith, as seated on a throne of grace, willing to hear and help, as astonished me; and, if I may so express it, held out the sceptre of mercy, as a token of love and gracious acceptance, as king Ahasuerus did of old to Esther. This passage of Scripture immediately occurred to my mind; but O, how different the condescension: the latter was but an earthly monarch, though he reigned over twenty-seven provinces; the former, the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only-wise God. A solemn, deep, yet sweet sense of the Divine presence penetrated my whole soul; and through mercy, I have never since lost the glorious view. O that it may prove transforming, and that I may be enabled to walk more humbly and closely with God than ever.

May 12. O God, how good, how strong art thou. On Thursday, had a sweet season in secret prayer. Soon after, my soul was much blessed with the perusal of a Christian friend's letter, highly favoured of the Lord. Jehovah drew nigh, and my soul felt as if set on fire; not only in point of strong desire, but of enjoyment. It was a precious season. Soon after, when joining a few Christian friends in prayer, praise, and Christian conversation, I found the place rendered sacred by the Divine presence; while my God set clearly before me, that inward life the Christian is called to live by faith in Jesus; and gave

me a rich taste of it. I felt sinking into Deity, losing myself in the ocean of Divine love; while Jehovah seemed to fill all space. In the evening, when in secret before God, he again repeated his wonderful goodness; felt so near, so manifested his Divine presence, as I can no ways express or explain. O Lord, grant great and permanent effects; let it not pass away unimproved, as too many of these wonderful and gracious manifestations have done; at least, not so much improved as they might have been, had I been more faithful. O Lord, I have daily cause of humiliation before thee; yet this does not prevent thy flow of mercy to me. How wonderful thy goodness, for Christ's sake, to thy poor dust and ashes. I would lie low before thee, and lament my unworthiness and unfaithfulness.

June 30, Friday. I have reason to bless the Lord for a sweet sense of his love shed abroad in my heart, with a deep, very deep consciousness of his goodness, both with respect to public and private affairs. Truly my meditations upon these doings of the Lord have been very comfortable. With respect to the former, I seem to have a sweet notice from on high, that public calamities have been retarded, our tranquillity lengthened, and many remarkable interpositions in behalf of our country obtained, by the unceasing prayer that has for many months been ascending in the name of Jesus, in various places, and by every denomination of Christians. And it appears to me, that while this spirit of prayer is continued,

national judgements will be suspended. I feel, therefore, a dread, lest any of us should be less frequent, or fervent, at a throne of grace now, when public affairs wear a more pleasing aspect: may a gracious God prevent it. I believe also it is particularly pleasing to him, that so many in different places, and in various situations in life, are stirring themselves up, to spread the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, both at home and abroad. O that this keen edge may never wear off, and that the Lord may countenance every attempt made agreeable to his will, for the conversion of sinners, and the building up of his saints.

July 21, Friday. These last eight days I have been much favoured with intense breathings after all the life of God; and tried with a keen sense of my weakness, and inability, to walk up to the light given. My heart almost breaketh for longings after what I do not attain. Help, Lord, —how long: O let it suffice. The time is short. Give me all I desire; *all, all,* that is in thee; *all* that, as a creature, I can receive. The way is made plain; the promises are on my side; also the faithfulness of God. I enjoy many sweet and powerful manifestations of the love of the Father and the Son; but these cannot suffice. My God, undertake for me, level every mountain. I have long felt my own weakness; now let me prove thy mighty power made manifest in it, and thine shall be the glory. Since last date, I have had a kind of general notice on my mind, as if the

Lord had more work for me, while my heart feels ardently desirous of being employed by him. I long for more active service, and plead and wish that he would raise up some to join me in it. Lord, let this light shine clearer, and make the impression deeper, if from thee.

August 11, Friday. Surely I am called to declare that God is love. Much of his goodness has passed before me since last date. Had, last sabbath, an opportunity of remembering the dying love of Jesus, with power to make known all my wants at his table; though not such a rich enjoyment of Divine things. On Monday, the eternal world and its blessed inhabitants seemed nigh. I felt as if mingling with kindred spirits, that had escaped from a land of misery, to the abodes of bliss. In the evening found it good to meet with a select few, and join in prayer, praise, and Christian conference. Many are my opportunities: O that my progress bore any proportion. One evening, after the fatigue of much business, while in secret prayer, the Lord Jesus drew unexpectedly nigh; quick as lightning he touched my heart with the fire of his love. I very soon found it was preparatory to trials, from which I suffered keenly for some time. I cried to my God to help, and lead into his will, which in mercy he soon did; pointed out my way, and gave power to walk in it, trusting in himself; rising above nature's false feelings, and victory quickly followed. A song of grateful praise was put into my mouth, and into

the hearts of others, particularly concerned in the final issue of the affair. O God, who is a God like unto thee! How often have I proved thee, in various kinds of straits, a present aid. Bless the Lord, O my soul. O that every instance of thy goodness may bring me nearer to thyself, and increase my conformity to the Divine Image.

October 20, Friday. My comforts have not been so strong these some days past, though still a measure of the Divine manifestation, with which I was favoured some weeks ago, remains; with a small renewal of it at times. My soul has mourned after greater nearness to my God. I felt as if I could not live without it. My feelings were something similar to what the poet expresses, of "tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven," for I experienced an increase of Divine love while thus exercised. But, alas, it is but a drop, compared with that fulness promised by a faithful God. O Lord, remove every hinderance, and let me prove this fulness for thy Name's sake. Teach me how to improve thy goodness; yea, thy every dispensation both of grace and providence. Yesterday was a time of trial in the morning, but soon after my God wonderfully turned my captivity; heard prayer, and came down to my help; we all felt his blessed presence, and made mention of his loving-kindness. I felt astonished at his goodness and power. O how soon can he turn mourning into joy.

Words fail to say, what my feelings have been these days past, on account of the wonderful interposition of a God of love as to public affairs; just when we seemed on the brink of destruction as an island. O how dark the political horizon appeared, from the recent events that had taken place in Paris; and from the sailing of the Dutch fleet (so long blocked up in their harbour, by the vigilance of Admiral Duncan) to join the formidable armament at Brest. It was believed a determined design to invade Great Britain or Ireland, and most likely both. At this *critical* moment, our Almighty Preserver appeared in our behalf, and delivered into our hands, after a desperate engagement, nine or ten of the Dutch ships, including two flag ships, with both admirals. Lord, how great is thy mercy! How great is thy power, for it is *thy doings;* therefore, *to thee* be all the glory. O write it deep on every British heart, "it is the doing of the Lord;" and teach all of us to render the thanks and praise that is due. O that thy goodness would lead us as a people to repentance. O God, give thy blessing with this signal deliverance, that we may yet be preserved and made a holy and a happy people. I never felt more jealous for the glory of my God, than on this signal occasion, lest we should not see, and that eminently, *his hand* in this great business; lest we should give that praise to men (who are but his instruments) which is due to the Lord alone. Surely he is the Hearer of prayer. None, O Lord, cry to thee in vain, that

cry aright. Blessed God, *maintain* what thou hast wrought for us.*

November 3, Friday. The tide of spiritual temptation has run high these eight days. My conflicts with the powers of darkness strong; yet have felt support, and, at times, comfort: a struggling into God; a wrestling spirit for every purchased blessing; especially sanctification, with the *seal* of the Holy Spirit. Without *this*, I find the power of painful temptation soon dims the evidence that arises from the *fruit* of the Spirit. I have felt powerfully drawn to a throne of grace these days past; yet when there, had the mortification to find all my kindling ardors die away; notwithstanding, I have sensibly experienced an increase of the love of God. He certainly, in some small degree, is *my God* and *my all*. But O, having tasted of his love, I cannot rest till I am lost in *him*; filled with all his promised fulness. I burn with desire to glorify him; and feel at the same time such an inability, such a piercing sense of my nothingness, as I can no ways express. O my God, when wilt thou satiate my weary soul; when wilt thou replenish my sorrowful heart: hasten the long-wished for period.

* This action, which was gallantly contested by the principal part of the enemy's fleet, proved one of the most brilliant and decisive engagements recorded in our naval annals. It was fought between Camperdown and Egmont, the land being about nine miles to leeward, October 11th of this year. For further particulars,

Vide Baines' Hist. &c. b. 2, ch. 1, p. 182.

Of late, I have felt the most ardent desire to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ: With what delight do I confess, and firmly believe Him the Son of God, *equal* with *the Father; yea, God over all, blessed for evermore*:—KING of ZION. Also, the *compassionate High Priest*, over the house of God. This in nothing derogates from the dignity of his kingly office. I lament the *awful heresy* of the day, and truly pity the *authors* and *abettors* of it. The former goes to rob Christ of all his glory, and to reduce him to a level with the creatures that were created by him; *for he created all things*; the latter, to the utmost of their limited power, build and support this wretched system of doctrine; and, by every possible means, disseminate their destructive principles. But the *baseless fabric* cannot stand, it must tumble down. "The heathen may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing: kings and rulers may take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed: but he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." Pity them, O my God, in time; that they may not be miserable through eternity.

LETTER LXXXV.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

August 24, 1797.

Although the letters in general of my friend in the Lord, are made spirit and life to my soul,

still I am generally, by one circumstance or another, prevented answering so soon as I could wish, even for my own sake. Every morning, I plead with my God to fit me for what he may call me to in the course of the day. If to write, that he may guide my pen; if to speak, that he may put his words in my mouth; if to act, that he may give that wisdom which cometh down from above: in hopes of the answer, I wish, I look, that the Hearer of Prayer may lead to some profitable matter. At this time, I praise him, for his goodness to you; and it is also matter of great thankfulness, I have to praise him for his goodness to myself, in public, in private, and in secret. Truly I may say, "God is Love." How condescending! How low does he stoop, to his dust and ashes! He makes me to rejoice. The Lord is King, and the King is now my Friend. How endearing, how delightful my fellowship with Deity, since I last wrote, eternity alone can say! And yet, O how far short of my vast, yea, unbounded desires. Great is my encouragement to press on, from him who delights to do his needy creatures good. Conscious of my many wants, I often, especially when with a few of his children for the purpose of social prayer, praise, and Christian conference, call upon my God to draw nigh and bless us: Jehovah instantly appears, and so penetrates me with a deep sense of his presence, as I would in vain attempt to express; but all present confess, "God is here." The adversary, before these pre-

cious seasons, tries every method to harass me, and to stop my mouth, by confusing my ideas. I feel such sterility of thought, such barrenness of expression, as is for the time truly trying: but He, whom men and devils must obey, soon commands him hence; and then the reign of light, life, love, and liberty takes place, and I sink sweetly into God. Nor is it a solitary blessing; while the words he gives are spoken in simplicity, all *feel*, and all *praise*.

Self-emptying work still goes forward, as preparatory, I trust, to larger incomes than ever. I *see* and *feel* my own nothingness in a way I cannot express; but as my friend well understands from her own experience. I literally find that I can do nothing, to any purpose, without continual assistance from *Him*, who giveth willingly. This has led me into such an habitual looking up for help, as enables me in some sort to go forward, in whatever I am called to; though not always so as to please myself.

"O that all the art might know
Of living thus to thee!
Find their heaven begun below,
And here thy glory see;
Walk in all the works prepar'd
By thee to exercise their grace;
Till they gain their full reward,
And see thy glorious face!"

These words of one of our hymns, struck me forcibly a few days ago, when called to speak of the Lord's dealings with my soul: and feeling

rather a degree of embarrassment, from the temptations above mentioned, they seemed so immediately given, and so expressed the language of my heart, as filled with gratitude, and set my lips at liberty. How am I blessed, and yet how unworthy. O my God, how undeserving of thy notice. O help me to glorify and enjoy thee to the *uttermost*. This is all I live for.

I think, if my heart does not deceive me, my general manner of life is a walking in the *simplicity* of *faith*: yet, with the conscious dignity of a soul closely united to Deity, that would grasp Infinity itself. Though I am willing to be the servant of all, to their edification, I cannot stoop to the trifles of life, which appear to many so important; neither to give *much* of my time to the creature. Having God, a little of them goes a great way.

You feel your God is *your all;* to direct, comfort, and instruct still further in the deep things of Deity; to enlarge your powers of reception, that you may sink still deeper in the boundless ocean of his pure love; till all you are is lost in him, and he is all your own. What endless cause of praise! Yet how feeble is our humanity! How many the weaknesses, less or more, inseparably connected with growing years. To bear them with patience, and Christian fortitude and dignity, and so as to glorify the Giver of all our mercies, is most desirable. The enemy tempts me, at times, to look forward a few years; and insinuates, if I should see them, what weaknesses I may then

experience; but I cast him and these thoughts behind, and leave all to my God, who has cared for me hitherto, and will to the end. I have thought of late that he has more work for me, but as yet I do not see where, or how; this also I leave with him. As an island, still we are spared; how wonderful! His goodness in this respect deeply affects me.

Is there any prospect of primitive Christianity being revived in your city? A spirit of love, I understand, has prevailed in the Conference. God is with us here; though we have not any remarkable ingathering of souls. Your heart, I hope, will never be estranged from that beloved Connexion. I would write to Miss Ritchie, but know not where to find her. A keen edge is upon the spirit of many in Scotland, which leads to many laudable attempts to spread the knowledge of the truth, at home and abroad. Since the departure of my two valuable friends, I have stood much alone; none comes to my help, either to assist with purse or counsel. Lately, I have wished that the Lord would bring forward some able and willing. I am much tried with the embarrassed state of Lady G—'s funds; more especially, as there is no surplus of my own: while opportunities, of various kinds, are daily occurring for active service, and my heart is keenly set for usefulness; but this also I must leave with God. Help me by your prayers; and believe me, with Christian regard, your poor fellow-pilgrim,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXXVI.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

September 5, 1797.

It has long been upon my mind to answer dear Miss Ritchie's profitable letter, received several months ago. She will, through the influence of that love which hopeth all things, forgive my seeming neglect, and accept a few lines written in the Christian spirit; and, in some degree, under a sweet gale of heavenly and Divine love. Of late, I have, through undeserved mercy, been much favoured with close and delightful fellowship with the Father, and the Son. O how does this dignify human nature; I must also say, how does it humble it, even to the dust. What a world of consolation, pure and indescribable, springs from this sacred fountain; ever full, yet ever flowing. And how simple the mode of conveyance, *by faith*. This is, indeed, a wonder-working principle, as one justly terms it. I shall bless my God, through all the unwasting ages of eternity, for the many useful lessons he has taught me respecting it; and still continues to teach me, and bears with my slowness in learning and practising them. O, who is a God like unto our God? I hope I may venture to say, he is my God and my all; who performeth all things for me.

"Far above all earthly things,
While yet my hands are here employ'd,
Sees my soul, the King of Kings,
And freely talks with God."

Amazing privilege : " Lord, what is man, that thou dost thus visit him." I have but a taste compared with what is purchased; and what I may be enabled to receive.

I bless the Lord, he daily sets before me the glorious prize; *all* the *communicable fulness of Deity*. The door stands open; he kindly invites me to come forward; and gives for my encouragement a *sweet taste*, which the poverty of human language prevents my explaining. At a prayer-meeting, about two or three weeks ago, my God gave me a rich display of his mercy. God the Father, and Son, broke in with sweet surprize upon my soul. He has given many powerful renewals of it since; and though not always with the same degree of joy, it has abode with me to the present moment. For some considerable time past, in our little class-meeting, in my own house, we have been most uncommonly favoured with the Divine presence. Jehovah comes down, and consecrates the place by his presence; and we are all constrained to confess a present God. He overshadows me, and fills with such a deep, holy, reverential awe, sweetly tempered with love, as I cannot explain. I sensibly feel that I speak under a sacred unction, which reaches the hearts of others; and so affects my own, that it seems as if the curtains of mortality were drawn aside, and heaven opened to our view. They are indeed precious seasons. O that we may be enabled to improve them to the uttermost.

I praise my God, who still keeps me poor in

spirit; truly sensible of my short-comings; yet constantly thirsting after the full enjoyment of every purchased blessing, and surrounded with the presence of the first Person of the glorious Trinity. How wonderful his condescension! For still I find my fellowship and intercourse is more constantly with the Father than with the Son; sometimes with both. And still I find communion with Jehovah, attended with a much larger measure of holy, solemn, reverential awe than with the Son. A peculiar degree of inexpressible sweetness attends the latter. I feel that I every moment want the merit of his blood, and every moment enjoy it: blessed Jesus, how infinite my obligations to Thee.

I feel at times shy to write, or speak, of the deep things of God! lest my testimony should not be received, or not understood; or lest any should suppose I have more grace than I really have. But I feel this inward life is so powerfully maintained, whilst I testify of it, that I cannot be altogether silent; though I do not often either write or speak fully of it. Let us press on to the heights and depths of redeeming love; and assist each other by prayer, &c. as our Lord shall direct. Our new preachers, this year, have been ushered into their appointment in this circuit with many tokens for good. Wishing Miss Ritchie every blessing purchased for her, I am, in gospel bonds, her friend and fellow pilgrim,

D. MAXWELL.

1798.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

January 5. In the beginning of this year, as usual, I renewed my engagement to be the Lord's, and *only* for him, with all I have, and am, or ever shall have. Lord, ratify the deed, and accept the poor gift of a poor worm, because offered upon that altar that sanctifies the gift. The day following, when at a throne of grace, and when beginning to ask the life of one of his ministers, Jehovah poured a spirit of prayer upon me; gave me a sensible manifestation of his love, and increase of fellowship; with much liberty to pray for the spiritual prosperity of his servant, but little freedom to ask for his life. I seemed to meet his spirit at a throne of grace, as full of joyous sensations before his God; and gratitude to me, for the interest taken in his welfare. I have hardly once bowed a knee in prayer since, without a repetition of this; nor ever lifted up my heart to the Lord, whether alone or with others, but instantly my friend joined me in spirit; when even his countenance appeared to the eye of my mind, as full of heavenly joy. This being rather a new

thing to me, I feel unable to decide upon it, and what to think of it I know not; therefore, only simply state the matter of fact. It is possible, in the course of providence, I may hear of something that will prove explanatory. I praise my God, who so blessed my own soul in my attempts to help a precious fellow-creature; and still helps me to hold fast the blessing. This requires no explanation being no unusual thing. O for gratitude.

February 2, Friday. Surely my God hath heard, pitied, and helped *me*, since last Friday. The latter part of *that day*, the Lord was good, and when tried unexpectedly, appeared in my behalf. He took hold, as it were, of my heart, and prevented any painful feeling; and filled me with a strong hope that he would undertake my cause, in one way or another; so that I remained unmoved, though appearances were much against attaining the object I had in view. But if the Lord says, "Fear not," "faith laughs at impossibilities, and cries, it shall be done." Though not as yet done, still my trust is in *Him*, who never fails to fulfil the hopes *himself* hath given. The following day, also, especially in the evening, the Lord felt graciously near, and my hope strong. On the Monday, likewise, I had reason to praise him; when reading of the Lord Jesus, he suddenly drew nigh, wonderfully clear to the eye of faith; and very soon after, in secret prayer, gave me a delightful view of the Sacred Trinity, of the personality of the Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost; of their equality, in power and glory, and sameness of substance. On Thursday, in secret prayer, he gave me sweet access to a throne of grace. I have since been tried with the distress and danger of one nearly allied by the ties of nature; for whom much prayer has ascended for his life, but more especially for the life of his soul. Hear, Lord, and answer the many petitions offered up for our poor guilty country; and, if possible, spare us yet. I bless the Lord for the privilege of secret prayer. What a source of comfort and profit to one's own soul, and that of others. Here we are permitted to pour out our souls, when grief assails, when danger is nigh, or apprehended to be so; when difficulties increase, and close and variegated trials press the spirits down; and in all these cases, find help, less or more, sooner or later, as our compassionate God and Saviour sees best.

March 23, Friday. Since last date, I have had some sweet and profitable times. On Monday evening, at the prayer-meeting, the Lord was present to bless and do us good. Through mercy, I obtained an answer, in a measure, to a petition frequently put up of late respecting that meeting: O that it may be fully answered. A fresh flame of strong desire seemed kindled in my soul, for the *full* possession of the *fullest* salvation of God. O how I longed to plunge into the Godhead's deepest sea of holy, pure, perfect love. I felt all on fire to be lost in the immensity of Deity. Since then, have been much drawn out in secret prayer to

plead for it; and have been favoured with such enlarged desires, such expanded glorious views of it, as brought a present heaven into my soul. The language of my heart was, and is,

"Sink me to perfection's height,
The depth of humble love."

This, not as a glorious acquisition to aggrandize, and bring much respect and admiration to *self* from surrounding creatures, or self-approbation; but, as the accomplishment of the gospel promises, to help me more to glorify God. These are scattered richly through the New Testament; such as 1st Corinthians, xiiith chapter, from the 4th verse to the end; also, chapter iiid of the Ephesians, from the 6th verse to the end; also, chapter vth of the 2d Thessalonians, from the 16th verse to the 24th inclusive. Though most of these are rather in the language of prayer and exhortation, than promises; yet it alters not the case, as we are morally certain, the apostle would neither have exhorted those to whom he wrote, to do these things; nor have prayed for them himself, if they were not to be obtained. Nay, he expressly says, at the 24th verse of the last reference: "*Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*" What will he do? He will sanctify wholly; he will fill with that perfect love that casteth out all fear. And all this will sink the creature to the dust, *feeling*, as well as *seeing*, we are nothing, and that Christ *is all in all.* None prize a Saviour as do these humble

souls; they feel they can do nothing without him;

> "Weaker than a bruised reed,
> Help they every moment need,"

They are taught to live every moment by *faith* upon him; not as an abstracted speculative principle, but by a *faith that brings deep peace and present power*. O my God, let me, for thy Name's sake, enjoy much of this full salvation, that stands so closely connected with poverty of spirit; with humble love, that gives the glory of all to Thee.

After this long digression, I go on to say:—On Tuesday morning, I had a delightful time in secret, from the views given me of the great things Christ has purchased for his people; and freely bestows on those, who, Abraham-like, stagger not at the promises through unbelief; but become strong in faith, and thus receive their accomplishment. I prove the great utility of living by simple faith, even in my small measure. It brings the soul to a throne of grace, as a child to an indulgent parent: not with a price in hand, but pleading *only* its own necessities—and to insure a supply, the *merits of Jesus;* who, by his meritorious sufferings, has purchased every blessing his people can want; well aware, that this alone can turn the scale in its favour. Lord, increase my faith, that I may glorify thee, by receiving all thou waitest to give. On Thursday, the Lord was present to teach and comfort us, when met for the purpose of praise,

prayer, and Christian conference, as those of old; and at night, in secret prayer, I was enabled to plead for more grace; deeply conscious of my short-comings, and saw both the willingness of my God to bestow, and the value of the blessings I asked. Lord, answer speedily. Have still been enabled to retain a measure of the blessing bestowed at the Lord's Supper as formerly mentioned. Yet I have been of late much and variously exercised in mind, on many accounts; and have had some severe trials to encounter: yet, if competent to judge, I feel more desirous of power to glorify my gracious God, by living in his will, than to be delivered from them. He knows what is best for me, and has ever been good to me in all his dispensations; therefore, I still endeavour in all to say, "Thy will be done;" and, also, in all to trust in him. I do find it good so to do; though yet many petitions, frequently and fervently put up, remain unanswered.

April 6, Friday. Still I walk in darkness, and have no light, in point of providential dispensations: but this I must qualify, so far as to say, it is only as to particulars. The Lord has, I think, given reason to believe, in general, judgements will overtake our guilty lands; but as to the precise time, the manner, the weight, the duration, I am altogether ignorant. How far either Church or State will be affected by them, I know not; or what the final result will be, *except that they will be followed by great days of*

*the gospel.** O God, thou art a God of mercy! Judgement is thy strange work; therefore I look up to thee. I can trust in thee in the time of trouble: thou hast given me good cause so to do. Yet, Lord, my heart trembles within me, and I am afraid of thy *just judgements*. *Just* they will be, come when they will. My inmost soul keenly feels the wonderful length and depth of thy mercy in sparing me so long. O that it may be sanctified to saints and sinners.†

With respect to the state of my own mind these eight days, I have had no very remarkable manifestations of Divine love, or visitations of severe trial. I have experienced sweet renewals of the blessing bestowed some weeks ago, at a sacramental occasion; some comfortable seasons at a throne of grace, in secret; and found that *simple faith* in Jesus, in time of trial, with prayer, has power with God. I have for many years viewed it my chief end to glorify God, and proved it my chief happiness to enjoy him. These views, of late, seem to grow brighter, and more impres-

* This seems almost prophetic. Thank God, we live to see those days. "O Jesus, ride on till all be subdued."

† These were not the apprehensions of a weak and timorous mind. Such was the general alarm, that the voluntary contributions for the support of the British government against the threatened French invasion, amounted this year to upwards of two millions and a half sterling, besides 139,332*l.* 15*s.* 2*d.* remitted from British residents at Bengal.

Vide Aspin's Ann. of Universal History. vol. i. p. 169.

alve: the will of God more precious. I seem to sink deeper into it; am made willing to embrace it, more uniformly, and more universally, than ever. I feel not only *unwilling* to choose for myself, but quite inadequate to the task of deciding what is best, and, therefore, esteem it a great privilege to have my God to choose for me in all things. Blessed Lord, carry forward thy work in me with a more marked progress. All my soul cries out for this; and all the powers of darkness unite to prevent it: but the God of salvation is above them all.

May 12, Friday. Still my God is doing his needy creature good. In the course of these last eight days, I have been favoured with many opportunities of entering the house of the Lord; during the dispensation of the word and sacrament in Edinburgh and its vicinity. On the *last day*, I looked and prayed for a spirit of holy mourning for myself and others. but my God gave me much sweet enjoyment of himself during a discourse from, "Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you." I felt sinking into Jehovah,—losing myself in him; in the possession of holy, solemn, sweet fellowship with Deity. O the wonderful condescension of the Most High, *for his Son's sake! This is the meritorious cause* of all our mercies. Eternal praise unto him as the great source of all present blessings, and future prospects. On the great day of the feast, my heart was greatly lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and my hands made strong by the mighty

God of Jacob. I felt surrounded with such an irresistible flood of meridian evidence for eternal happiness, as was pleasing to experience; yet felt a holy shame; deeply conscious how unworthy I was of it. O that my God may be glorified in every instance of his goodness to his poor creature, by giving me to feel much of its transforming influence. For a day or two after my happiness did not increase. I was rather called to listen to Divine teaching, respecting greater victories over *self*, and more frequent and fervent addresses at a throne of grace. The former was attained; the latter, I trust, will also be bestowed. During several days of last week, the love of Jesus burned in my heart with a strong flame. I felt very zealous for, and jealous lest, any should successfully attempt to rob him of any part of his glory, as *Son of, and equal to, God the Father*. My heart revolted with a holy indignation at every attempt so injurious and vain: yet not so as to exclude prayer for such daring sinners. On Thursday, my gracious God was sensibly present, with a few select ones, met for praise, prayer, and Christian converse. It felt a sacred hour. Truly it is often good for me, and some others, on these occasions, to draw nigh unto God. This morning, agreeable to instruction from on high, *self* was conquered; yet, at secret prayer, I did not feel all that access I wished, neither that for which I looked; yet possessed much desire for both. Soon after, in pleading with the Lord for three important things

in particular, and intreating for an answer, I seemed to obtain it for two of them, in these words: "And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread and thy water:" and much comfort respecting the third, from part of the xxxvith and xxxviith chapters of Isaiah, where Hezekiah cries to the Lord against the insults of the enemies of the Lord, and the threatened invasion of his lands by the king of Assyria, and by his General Rabshakeh. Twice Isaiah was commissioned by the Lord to deliver most comfortable answers to his requests. I would lie low before the Lord on account of his goodness, and my own unworthiness. He gave me much comfort this day also from these words, "Call upon me and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not:" also, "Behold, I will bring health, and a cure; and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth." Also, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah." Amen; even so be it, as thou hast spoken unto thy dust and ashes.

—— 18, Friday. Still, through the tender mercy of my God, I have to record fresh proofs of his goodness, since the 12th inst. On Tuesday last, when hearing my week-day school examined, (for the purpose of dismissing, with a Bible, and with prayer, praise, and much exhortation, nineteen scholars fully taught, besides two

more of one year's standing only, *now* put into the Orphan Hospital,) I felt very languid; but on lifting up my request to the Hearer of prayer, that he would give me the souls of all the young ones present (forty-nine) for my hire, my God drew nigh, *very nigh*, and I felt filled with a reverential awe:—a heaven of silent, holy love, overspread my whole soul. Indescribable serenity, a deep, sweet sense of the Divine presence, pierced my heart. O that my request may be given me. In the evening, Jehovah again broke in with holy, sweet surprise, upon my whole soul, (though not engaged in any devotional exercise) with all his softening power, and my heart felt filled with heavenly tenderness; yea, all dissolved in love. O, what must the *full fruition of Deity* above be, when here below, a drop, a *degree* of nearness, so captivates the soul; so arrests every power of the mind, that faith seems lost in enjoyment! Blessed Lord, enlarge my capacity, and fill me with thy fulness.

August 24, Friday. I have many mercies and privileges to acknowledge. The communion of particular saints has been sweet; and of others, I trust, profitable; as it led to much, very much prayer; but still they are not my God. O how empty would every privilege be without his *Divine presence! this* increases, greatly increases every temporal and spiritual privilege in point of enjoyment. The full fruition of Deity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, ONE GOD, alone can satisfy the vast desires of my soul. This includes *con-*

formity and *continual fellowship;* and I believe the latter is in exact proportion to the former. In the nature of things it must be so. My soul pants after holiness on this account. O let the Almighty fiat go forth! My God has so formed my spirit, that I cannot be happy but in *himself.* Mistress of the whole universe, what a poor, empty, miserable creature should I be! What an aching void should I feel without Him! Come then, my God, fulfil my large desires, large as infinity. Give all my Jesus hath purchased; with not only inclination, but power to lay it out all for Thee.

October 26, Friday. Since last Friday I have been confined to the house, but yesterday I went abroad, and felt my Lord nigh, and his love increased in my soul: had, also, a sweet time in secret in the morning; and at noon also, when with two of his ministering servants:—they also were comforted. I have found my absence from the house of God painful, though at times have felt holy, sweet nearness to him. *This* is my element. But O, who that has tasted of this exquisite enjoyment, but must pant for more. Surely this is congenial to the new creature, to the heaven-born soul: but the blessing of *desire,* even the most intense, is far short of *possession.* Come then, O my God, and every moment fill my soul with thy pure love; encompass with thy presence; encircle in thy Divine arms. O what is all the world calls great, or good; what is all terrestrial happiness, when compared with

the pure, the perfect love of God, that casteth out fear; that, as it were, annihilates self. Then the soul feels lost in God,—blessed with inexpressible nearness to Jehovah, through the only medium, the Lord Jesus Christ. I have but *tasted* of this; yet, blessed be God for a *taste*, which I trust is a prelude to the full enjoyment. At times, in the course of these eight days, the cup has felt bitter; yet, I think the bitterest ingredient was feeling, to my own apprehension, a want of power to glorify my God in the fires, as I wished. His will is very precious, and my feelings very quick; the smallest deviation pains accutely.

O the height and depth of Divine mercy to our guilty lands! The poverty of human language prevents expressing what I feel, and what others should feel, on the present occasion. Just before the Brest fleet got to the Irish shore, with about 6,000 troops, arms, ammunition, stores, clothing, and much money, to join the Irish rebels; our God interposed, and gave the whole into our hands, by Sir John Borlase Warren. Lord, to thee all glory is due! Incline all to give it.*

* This victory was highly important in its consequences, as it led to the final termination of the Irish rebellion. A rebellion bloody and abhorrent, and which had continued to rage with unrelenting fury, for three months, in which more than thirty thousand lives were sacrificed, and property to the amount of upwards of two millions sterling destroyed; and which, after throwing the whole kingdom into indescribable confusion and dismay, overwhelmed the

December 28, Friday. The cup of blessing I have, in a delightful degree, been permitted to drink of, since the 21st. My obligations to a God of love greatly increase: yet, still I thirst for more. My desires are insatiable after the Chief Good. O, who that loves his God, can love enough? I feel much holy shame that I come so far behind. I loathe myself, and into nothing fall, when thus highly favoured from on high. These days past, especially at times, my nearness to Deity I cannot express. One of these precious seasons I enjoyed yesterday, when employed as I generally am on that day. Such an astonishing realizing of the Divine presence, Father and Son, as made me amazed that *faith itself* could make so manifest those great realities to the eye of the mind. Human language can in no way express what the soul enjoys on these memorable occasions. Yet I am well aware, that it is not the *mere enjoyment*, however *exquisite*, which ascertains their value, but their *transforming influence*.

instigators in one common ruin. That the object of this deep-laid and extensive conspiracy was to imitate the example set by the people of Holland, and to erect Ireland into a republic, through the agency of France, cannot be doubted; and had the French directory manifested as much promptitude in executing, as the original conspirators displayed ability in forming their plans, this revolutionary struggle might have ended in a measure which can never be sufficiently deprecated; not only as tending to the alienation of a large portion of the strength of the empire, but as an event involving its prosperity and independence.

Vide Baine's His. b. 2. ch. 9. p. 249.

For this I plead with the Hearer of prayer. O that I may prevail to the utmost! then his great Name shall be glorified, and my soul eternally profited; and perhaps some of my fellow-sinners, or saints also; for all things are possible with the Almighty. On Monday evening, in public, the Divine arm was made bare in my behalf, both as to additional strength and comfort, and I clearly saw to whom I was indebted. On Tuesday morning, and this day early, I was highly favoured in secret prayer, with sweet access;—much liberty in pleading for all I wanted, and with soul-animating hopes of success. The word of God was indeed made food to me, especially particular promises. O what thanks are due! But no degree of grace will secure from temptation. I had soon after an attack from the wicked one. How soon should I be conquered, but for Divine strength exerted in my weakness. My God has, indeed, answered my request for a blessing in the close of the year. May he still do greater things before it ends, and increase them as soon as 1799 begins, and fully substantiate the hope he has given, and all the praise shall be His.

LETTER LXXXVII.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

May 31, 1798.

I bless the Lord, who put it into the heart of my respected friend in Jesus, to send me a few

lines, which came to hand only yesterday, though under date May 19. This morning I sensibly met your spirit at a throne of grace, and seemed sweetly to unite in worshipping the Sacred Three. Perhaps your God will yet spare you a little longer for his church's sake. But why should I wish to detain you longer from entering into the joy of your Lord? He makes you feel, that though the earthly house fails, the immortal part waxes stronger and stronger. All shrinking will, I doubt not, be done away. It is owing to the weakness of the human frame; while the soul mounts up, as on eagle's wings, to see and meet its Lord, and many kindred souls gone before. O glorious day! I trust, through super-abounding grace, to join you. What extremes now meet in your situation! feeble and weak, yet the joy of the Lord your strength. He feeds the flame that shall never be extinguished: it shall burn brighter and brighter till it mingles with the blaze of eternal day. When you shall sink into Deity,—be lost and swallowed up in holy love, wonder, and praise. Your intense desire for a triumphant exit, will surely be answered for the comfort and encouragement of those left behind.

My God is still doing his needy creature good. Since my last, I have been favoured with Divine teaching, and with such intimate nearness to Jehovah, as no language can express. It truly lays and keeps me in the dust. I loathe myself; in short, I find silence must convey my feelings

on this part of my subject, for words cannot. But my friend knows what I would say from her own knowledge of this part of Christian experience. I do find I would be the servant of all: but am unworthy of the ground on which I tread. I *feel* the universality of the fall: yet, astonishing, I am raised up, for Christ's sake, to union with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jehovah teaches and enables me to pass through Jesus as the way to himself; and there I rest as in my centre; and the deeper I sink *here*, the less I appear in my own eyes, and prove extremes united. At times, there is such views given of those great realities, only seen by faith, as must remain untold; but they grow more impressive, and cause my heart to burn with holy intense desire to possess the fulness of God. I cannot rest in any thing as yet bestowed. It seems but a taste. In the Select Society, O how does Jehovah break in upon my soul; and our class, is more than ever owned and favoured with the Sacred Presence. All glory to him to whom alone it belongs. I am ashamed to say so much: you will not mistake me. But this letter is by far too tedious for your weak frame: yet must farther say, the goodness of my God to our guilty lands, so overpowers my frame, as I cannot express. I seem to feel the sins of all, and blush and grieve for them before a God of love.

Peace, love, joy, and abounding grace be with my friend on earth, and, at last, a joyous entrance

into glory, be ministered unto her happy spirit, prays her fellow-pilgrim in the Lord Jesus,

D. M.

P. S. If strength is given to send another line, it will be a particular favour. If not, from one of your meeting. Farewell!

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

July 11, 1798.

My much respected and highly favoured friend's letter afforded sacred satisfaction. We would join in calling upon our souls, and all that is within us, to magnify and bless the God of grace and consolation, for his gracious dealings with his people in general, and with us in particular. But O,

> "What angel tongue can tell,
> His love immense, unsearchable?"

We have tasted of it, blessed be his Name; and through mercy, are hastening to the full enjoyment: the Lord enlarge our receptive powers; widen our capacities, and fill us full; not merely for our own happiness, but that we may glorify him to the utmost while on earth, and be thus fitted for the fullest enjoyment of Deity in eternity. My soul burns daily with increasing desire to glorify my God; to sink into him, and live in his will. I see this as affording the most exqui-

sitely pure enjoyment, even in this world, where we are surrounded with innumerable weaknesses, necessarily connected with our fallen natures. What must it be above, when all these are done away? when that which is *perfect* is come? We are lost in the inquiry!!! Sweet, inexpressibly so, has been my spiritual enjoyments since I last wrote. I seem to get nearer to Jehovah; and with that, such opening rays of glory—such views as I can no ways express or explain! O, how does he bear with me! And, when I plead for his immediate presence, especially with one or more persons that I wish to profit, he condescends instantly to draw near. Of late, I have been more highly favoured, in this way, than those with me.

We have had a Mr. S—, of C—, fellow of the College, (a most approved clergyman, and heavenly devoted soul,) preaching here for some weeks to crowded audiences In all my interviews with him, whether alone or with others, more especially the former, my mouth hath been wonderfully opened to speak of the deep things of God: while the Most High witnessed to the truth, by his presence with both of us; and my heart, from sweet experience, corroborated the evidence. I do not know that I ever met with one, except among the Methodists, that received with such evident delight, what I said on that subject; or with whom I found equal liberty. At times, his heart seemed all on fire to seize the perfect bliss, with much present en-

joyment; at others, he was dissolved in tears, feeling his poverty and unworthiness. I would hope the Lord is to do great things for, and by him.

With all this goodness shewn me, I am kept little and mean in my own eyes; made deeply sensible of many weaknesses; of my utter unworthiness; so as to stand astonished that a holy God can love me, or even bear with me: but am, with my friend, taught to keep these things mostly to myself, well knowing they would be, perhaps, hurtful to others; yea, a stumbling.

Your obligations are great indeed: a patient bearing, in silence, your infirmities, will bring glory to your God, add to the triumph of grace *here*, and to the enhancement of glory *hereafter*. Am refreshed with the accounts of your aged friend, and would press after her. You will yet triumph more. There is a glorious work going on. Farewell, highly favoured soul. Through abounding grace, I hope to meet you in glory! till then, let us help each other, and press through, and over, every seeming hinderance. Help, O, our God, and thine shall be the glory, willingly ascribed by D. M. and E. J. for ever.

D. MAXWELL.

1799.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

April 5. Through mercy I still live, and am able to testify of the great goodness of my God and Saviour. On Sabbath morning, the 31st of March, soon after public worship began, especially during the first prayer, I felt much engaged with the Lord. My whole soul flowed out in strong desire for some peculiar blessing, of which I stood much in need. While the speaker expounded from the first five verses of the iid chapter of the Revelations, especially the fourth verse, where the Lord Jesus, after mentioning his knowledge and approbation of what was still good in the church of Ephesus, charges them with having *left* their *first love;* I felt involuntarily led to examine myself on this head, as in the presence of God, and thought I found some reason to conclude I had not. Yet, fearing to trust my own conclusions in such an important matter, I begged the Lord to let me know, from *himself*, how that solemn business stood. In a moment or two, these words seemed spoken to *my heart*, by the Lord Jesus :—" O woman, greatly beloved, fear

not." Dreading delusion, I feared to receive them, but still they were repeated again and again, with such power, and accompanied with so much love, I durst not reject them. With them I seemed also to obtain such an additional *hold of Jesus*, as I can by no means express. Many powerful renewals of this gracious visit I was favoured with, through that and the following day, and with each, a heaven of love filled my heart, and, I trust, a measure of humility was not unfelt: especially on Monday evening, I was lost in wonder, love and astonishment, that the adorable Saviour should so condescend to a poor unworthy creature. It is mystery all! O who can fathom the depth of redeeming love! Almost every day this week I have proved some of his goodness. O that it may be permanent, and, by sovereign aid, purifying! and also, a continual stimulus to activity and zeal in the cause and ways of my God. I see, I feel, how short I am; but in a moment he can work a great work. Come, Lord Jesus, and lay every aspiring mountain low; and reign the Lord of every motion of my heart. How willingly shall I obey.

May 24. I feel more of a spirit of prayer: I see more of the loveliness of Jesus; of his immense value; of the heaven there is in his love. Had I ten thousand worlds, how willingly would I give them all to feel my *heart brim-full* of his pure love; to have him reigning in it; occupying all space; bringing every thought into captivity to himself. Surely, Lord, these insatiable

desires must be from on high. Wilt not thou, then, fulfil them? Come, O my God, and not only do *this*, but "do exceedingly above all I can *ask* or *think*:" for how limited my petitions—how scanty my thoughts! Since the 17th my comforts have not been so rich and strong as often they are; yet have cause to be thankful for many mercies. On Monday evening, at the prayer-meeting, the Lord seemed to shine on his work in my soul, so as to cause me to think he had done more for me than of which I am always sensible. It is only in his light we can see and know the things freely given us of him. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, he gave me repeated opportunities for the spiritual benefit of my fellow-creatures, especially in the higher walks of life. I omitted last week mentioning a large opportunity given me, that occurs *only annually*: the examination of my week-day school in Edinburgh; united with prayer, praise, and a most appropriate exhortation to the scholars then dismissed, fully taught. They receive each a Bible, with their name upon it, and a single weighty sentence marked under it, as pronounced by the minister, who delivers it; also, an *address* is given to those scholars who are then to enter, and to those that remain. About *sixty children* were present, besides grown people. My God, give me the souls of all that have been, are now, or ever shall be in that school. O that I may meet them all on the right hand, at the great day of *decision*! They *now* amount to *four hundred and eighty*

nine. My God I found sweetly present with us. On Thursday, as usual, he condescended to meet with us of a truth, and renewed my strength, exhausted before by two hours close conversation with *one*, who seems to be athirst for present salvation—for living wholly for and with God. Blessed Lord, let none turn her out of thy way: help her to press on in the good way. Though weakness itself, yet, gracious God, put thy words in my mouth on every such occasion; then, speaking under an unction from on high, it shall be in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. I long to be more useful. Indulgent Lord, grant my request; and take the glory of all, and make me more thankful for thy past goodness. On Wednesday evening, my God was, in straits, a present aid. Supposing danger was nigh, I felt desirous to shun it, and cried unto the Lord, who, in a moment, sent these words with sweetness, and a degree of power, so as to calm my fears, and enable me to adore his goodness; "What time I am afraid, I will put my trust in thee." O to be more grateful!

July 5. My Christian experiences for these eight days past are very similar to the preceding week, nothing worthy of remark. Only upon the whole, I find myself strengthened for duty, in body and mind, and fitted for what I was called to. On Monday morning, in secret prayer, the Lord corrected a mistake I have sometimes of late made, in pressing after every new covenant blessing, namely, allowing a vehement desire

after what I have not yet *attained*, to make me overlook what I had, through mercy, obtained; thereby lessening present enjoyment, and endangering a degree of impatience. My God shews me, as he has done formerly, the most excellent way is, that while pleading in a meek and patient spirit, faith must be exercised; the heart opened for present reception; believing the Lord is willing *now* to give, for Christ's sake, what is asked. Attempting this, I quickly found an increase. Jesus was ready to enter, and did pour himself into my heart. In the evening, at the prayer-meeting, I found the Lord owning me much; blessing me with sweet consciousness of his presence; which greatly increased, when a select few were speaking of his dealings with their souls, as Christian prudence directed. *Here*, indeed, he seemed to bow the heavens and come down; the mountains, as it were, flowed down at his presence; my views of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were *clear*, and *impressive*. I felt filled with wonder and love; yea, with what mortal language cannot express. Surely it was a taste of heaven; and I bless the Father of Mercies it has often been renewed since; or I may rather say continued with me. It was a meal, in the strength of which, I have made many exertions. O my God, grant it may be the beginning of greater things than ever: I pant for a larger sphere of usefulness: I would be ever either getting or doing good: I would, but *thou* must give the power. On Wednesday even-

ing, though in company, I had a sweet renewal of the blessing, aiming at faithfulness for my God, he owned and helped me: but much more so on Thursday noon, when with a few of those that love and enjoy him, and preach the gospel of Christ, who were met expecting his presence; and of a truth he more than realized our expectations. What in his love possessed we not? There seemed a heaven without, and a heaven within; but still the poverty of human language lays an embargo on my pen; but sweet, inexpressibly sweet, as these wonderful visitations are, it is their *transforming influence I chiefly* value. Give me *this*, O my God, then shall I glorify thee, in the reception of thy favours; here I feel painfully short; pity and save.

——26. Since last date, my God has been good in various ways. On Sabbath, found it good to wait on him, and profitable to others. On Monday evening, in public, the Lord exceeded my expectations, blessed be his holy Name. On Wednesday, from home, he helped me to great exertion: was assailed with keen temptation, but the adversary was rebuked, and I was kept in peace. On Thursday, was carried through much; felt a door of utterance *given me*, for the benefit of a female disciple in high life; desirous of being all the Lord would have her. Speak, Holy Father, to her *heart*, and let her prove thou didst put "Thy words in my mouth," according to thy promise;

therefore, she *felt* them. Just after, joined with two ministering servants of Christ in prayer, praise, and Christian conversation; and truly, it was a Bethel indeed. O the wonderful condescension of Jehovah. Was afterwards helped to profitable conversation, with power to confess my God before others; and in the evening, had the privilege of attending a public prayer-meeting. O Lord, pour a greater spirit of prayer upon all thy people.

This week, found my feelings harrowed up by reading Memoirs illustrating the history of Jacobinism, by the Abbe Barrnel. This work developes such dreadful hellish tenets, principles, plots, and practices, as must shock, not only Christians of every denomination, but *every person,—Deists, Arians, Socinians;* yea, *every creature,* that is not wholly under satanic influence, I may say, *judicial blindness and hardness of heart.* These deluded men, with their horrid devices, go to annihilate every law, human and divine; to break every social tie; to deny, not only revelation, but even the very existence of Deity; and to make every crime, even the most atrocious, not only innocent, but meritorious; if it only contributes to accomplish the ends they have in view. This is what they term, *illuminizing* the whole world, by restoring man to original perfection; a perfection which requires no governments of any kind, nor any property, nor any subordination. How lamentable to think, that these dreadful principles have taken root in almost every part of

the known world; by the unabating vigilance of their abettors; who have recourse to every stratagem that the devil can suggest, or the wicked heart of fallen man devise, in order to promote their universal spread among every class of human beings; from the king on the throne, to the meanest subject. O blessed God, counteract the hellish poison, by an equal dissemination of the pure truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thou art above all in power and goodness. O let not our island fall a prey to these devourers of mankind. We deserve it, but in mercy spare. Multitudes of them are among us in disguise.

In reading this shocking account, O how sweetly nigh did the adorable Saviour draw to me! how clearly did he shine on my soul! it is impossible to express what I felt in him. I saw a glorious antidote against all evil;—the Healer of mankind;—the comfort of his people;—and their portion through all eternity. We would rejoice that *all this* is promised, and that vigorous attempts are now making for the accomplishment of it.

August 23. For these eight days past, my spiritual enjoyments have not been so great. While in the body, our frames will and must vary, even from natural causes. He that made us knows this. But still I have cause to praise my God, for many mercies since my last date. His will is very precious. I feel much satisfaction in committing my ways to him; in asking direction from him; and he gives me to feel it is not in

vain to trust in him. Of this I have had a fresh proof within these few days. Yesterday, he made all present delightfully sensible of his special presence, while engaged in prayer, praise, &c. But I want to get nearer Jehovah, who is the centre of my soul, I hope I may say, my God and my all, in a low degree: at least, I am kept keenly sensible of my short-comings, and strongly desirous of being all that grace can make me. Have been much detained from the means of grace by bodily weakness, and other causes, which grieved me. A gracious God is carrying on his work remarkably in different places. Lord, increase it greatly, and O be more powerfully with, and among us. Still, Holy Father, thou art doing wonderful things as to public matters. O, the height and depth of thy goodness; it is indeed past finding out. But still I tremble, lest by our ingratitude we force thee to punish us in one way or another. My heart powerfully feels thy astonishing mercy to our guilty island, and I as deeply feel our returns are not what they ought to be. Help, Lord, for the glory of thy Name; and pour out thy Spirit upon us, that a visible change may take place upon us as a people.

September 27. Since last date, my intercourse with the Son of God and the Saviour of my soul, has been peculiarly near and sweet; and I trust I may freely say, profitable to myself, and I would hope to others. On Lord's-day morning, early in secret at a throne of grace, my Jesus said,

"Whatsoever ye ask in my name, it shall be done unto you." I felt sweetly surprised with his great condescension, and wished much to improve this gracious promise for others, as well as myself. Numbers of individuals crowded in upon my mind, as if pleading to be remembered, which I found most willing to do, and had great liberty in attempting it; yea, my heart felt so enlarged in the duty, that I wished, had it been possible, to have brought the whole world, and laid them down at the Redeemer's feet; and to have spent days and nights in pleading for them, had the necessities of the mortal frame permitted. Soon after, when ruminating on the wonderful interview with which I had been favoured, Jesus again spoke and said, "Ask what you will, and it shall be given." Here astonishment and love filled my whole soul, while I cried mightily for the prosperity of Zion. In the house of God, soon after, my heart was lifted up to the Hearer of prayer, in behalf of all he brought before me. Monday and Tuesday, had sweet renewals of the promise; yea, the simple recalling of the gracious words, brought instant comfort, and much sweetness, with strong desires to pray without ceasing. But quickly, the combined powers of darkness attacked me, which surprised me greatly, supposing I had only to ask and receive. I cried to the Lord all Wednesday and Thursday morning, that he would answer for himself, if it *were him* that had spoken; (for the adversary slily, yea, strongly insinuated, that it was *not*,)

and Jesus again greatly comforted me and confirmed my soul in the sweet belief it was indeed *himself*, and that he would do as he had spoken; but the *time when*, he left with himself, and to me it is given to pray and wait. On Thursday, as usual, we were visited with the Divine presence remarkably. Blessed Lord, come quickly, and grant me all I have asked for myself and for others; and let mine eyes see the prosperity of thy Zion.

December 20. These last eight days, as the former, have been marked with fresh proofs of the loving-kindness of him, who is rich in mercy to his people, by most sweet and sensible visits from on high, in public and in private; in the house of prayer, and in my own habitation. These are exhilarating to the human mind, and raise it above all sublunary things. They open a new world realized by faith, wherein dwelleth righteousness: a world of angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect; but above all, the Lord our righteousness abideth there; God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and the Christian is enabled to feel through mercy the powers of this world to come. But, O, to get nearer to my God; to my adorable Saviour, while here below. O to get fully possessed of all that I see is purchased by the friend of sinners: how far from this: speak, Lord, and it shall be done. One word, one touch, yea, *one look from thee*, will accomplish it. O give these *bold acts* of faith that lays full hold of thy mighty power, by which

thou destroyest the works of satan. Fill my heart with thy pure love, and the continual abode of thy Spirit: say, "*I will*—be it so." Amen, Lord, so let it be.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

February, 1799.

Dear Miss Ritchie's letter would not have remained so long unanswered, but that I did not feel liberty to give up to the inspection of any one, letters in which my worthy friend had laid open her inmost soul without any reserve. In a recent perusal, I have found them so profitable as has, after much prayer, determined me to send them. I beg they may be kept by Miss R. till I determine the mode of their return. I have none of an older date than 1789, and in several of them, only the day of the month is mentioned; which leads me to conclude they will not answer the end intended by Miss R—, or the friends that request them. They are indeed valuable, but too particular to be made public; and so over-rate my poor epistles, that I feel hurt with the idea of any but myself looking into them. I have made a few, but very few erasures. If the end intended, can be answered by Miss R—'s perusal alone, it would be well.

I feel my loss; such a praying friend and deeply experienced Christian, is rarely to be met

with. But thanks, eternal thanks to the Father of Mercies, and God of all consolation, who has taught, and does permit me, to come to the *fountain*. Of late he has brought me nearer to himself. I hope I may venture to say, my prospects widen, my experience deepens, I seem to sink deeper into Deity, and more than ever to lose my own will. I find the will of my God so precious, I hardly know how to form a petition, but, "Thy will be done;" and he is so indulgent, so tender of me, as no language can express better, than the 2d and 3d verses of the xxviith chapter of Isaiah. For a considerable time past, my fellowship with the Father and the Son, has been sensibly increasing; and through mercy, I can also say, so has *poverty of spirit*. My soul lies humble in the dust before Jehovah as *a mere nothing*. Yet, he gives me clearly to perceive the dignity to which he has raised me, by such holy nearness to, and Divine communion with, the Sacred Three. Of late, I have been favoured with a more clear, satisfactory, and impressive view of the personality of the Holy Spirit, than for some time past. Such a powerful notice on my mind of his dignity, divinity, and equality with the Father and the Son, as I cannot express; of his good-will to man; and of the great and important part he takes in the salvation of sinners, by all his diversified operations: preparing their mind to receive, and actually applying every new covenant blessing, so dearly purchased by the Lord Jesus; but freely bestowed,

upon penitent sinners. These are precious manifestations; but I am aware it is not *merely enjoyment*, however exquisite that ascertains their value, but their *transforming influence*. May my God give me to prove this to its greatest extent.

I hope Mrs. Johnson's manuscripts will appear to advantage. I trust they are left in hands able, under the Divine influence, to make a judicious selection. Miss R— will accept of my thanks for her letter, though the notification was painful. This I send by post; the packet will be dispatched this week as directed. I hope unity prevails, and that the work of God prospers in Bristol. I am Miss Ritchie's well-wisher in the Lord,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER LXXXIX.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

December 3, 1799.

I feel for dear Miss Ritchie's severe trials, but believe it is her privilege to rise above the painful dispensation; and with heartfelt resignation to say, "It is the doing of my God, whose will is so precious to me, I cannot choose;" yet, at the same time, I tenderly feel her loss. Apathy is no friend to religion: but it is in the nature of Divine love to rise superior to whatever would press it down; it must be above, it is a noble generous principle. May this pure love flow in copious streams through our souls, and daily

increase. Speaking after the manner of men, it is indeed a severe stroke to the society; but I see it is such an easy matter for the Lord, who loves his people, fully and quickly to supply the vacancy, that I am not permitted to dwell upon it. *God is love:* what an endearing character! I seem to see and feel, that all things may be obtained by prayer, which are for the glory of God and the real good of those that belong to him, whether as individuals, or as a collective body. Some weeks ago, Jesus said to me, when at a throne of grace, "Whatsoever you ask in my Name, it shall be done unto you." These words seemed to set fire to my soul: multitudes were set before me for which to pray; and I would have grasped the whole world of sinners, and brought them to the dear Redeemer. Soon after this, when meditating upon the wonderful condescension of my Lord, in speaking thus graciously and familiarly to his dust and ashes, he again drew nigh, and said, "Yea, ask what you will, and it shall be given." I felt lost and swallowed up in *wonder, love, and praise.* No language can express my feelings; but from the holy nearness to Deity with which Miss R. is favoured, she can suppose what they were. I endeavoured to improve the great latitude given me, and have often wished that the feeble body would have permitted my spending nights and days at a throne of grace. It has proved a strong stimulus to prayer; and my condescending Lord has given many powerful renewals of the delightful ma-

festation, which adds fuel to the fire he has kindled. May every end designed by the Friend of sinners be answered by it.

For many months I have been getting nearer to *Jehovah*. O what in my intercourse with him possess I not! What holy reverential awe! what depths of love! what glories open to my view! Eternity alone can unfold the wonders of his love to me. Assist by your prayers, that I may be found faithful, fruitful, and more useful.

The Edinburgh Society is in a more promising state than usual. The class that meets in my house is become quite a Penuel. Deity is so present, that all within each heart confesses a present God. Had time permitted, I would have given you a detail of my spiritual enjoyment, under the word preached last Lord's-day by Mr. Henshaw: suffice it to say, it was not only the house of God, but the gate of heaven. Three of those with whom I meet in band, are struggling to step into the liberty of God's people. Help them forward. I shall be pleased to hear that your grief is lost in love and praise; and your brother's place well filled up. Please give my Christian remembrance to Mr. and Mrs. Botts. In haste, I remain, with Christian regard, dear Miss Ritchie's friend in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

1800.

Diary and Correspondence continued.

January 3. My wishes, expectations, and prayers, for a remarkable visitation from my God, have not been so fully granted as I hoped for; I mean, on the *last* day of the former, and the *first* day of this year. But upon every slight survey of the Lord's dealings with me, in the course of the preceding year, I may venture to say, the scale of mercy has almost continually preponderated; and I would hope, I may also add, I trust I have not lost ground, though I have much cause to *blush*, that I have not gained more. When I consider the unwearied goodness of my God; the astonishingly rich and numberless manifestations of Divine love with which I have been favoured; the blessed times of nearness to Deity I have enjoyed; the holy familiarity Jehovah has allowed me with himself; the sweet and sensible union I have enjoyed with the Lord Jesus Christ; the clear and impressive notice of future events given me respecting myself and others; the precious soul-

animating words spoken to me by my adorable Lord and Saviour; the wonderful effects produced by them on my whole frame; the force of them that still remains with me, with the sure belief of their full accomplishment; the many exertions and appearances of my God for me when tempted, tried, and greatly troubled;—all excite my wonder and grief, that my progress heavenward has not been more *evident*. Blessed Father, forgive and pity thy poor child, who cannot forgive herself; and who, to the present moment, pants to be all thou wouldst have her. I humbly thank and adore thee for all the rich mercies of the past year. May *they*, while I am spared, increase my power to make suitable returns, for Christ's sake.

March 7. Since the 9th of February, I have been confined, but my God mixed mercy with the dispensation; especially, in allowing me an unusual spirit of prayer, even when confined to bed. May he who gave it, answer his Spirit's cry in my heart, *now*, when he has seen meet to raise me up again; and give me to feel that the painful visitation bringeth forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness; as a proof I have, at least, been aiming at being properly exercised during its continuance. What helpless creatures are we, without continual aid from on high at all times; but particularly when in the furnace of affliction. Blessed God, make manifest thy mighty power in my weakness; and let me feel thee ever nigh, and thus be solidly happy in thyself. Save,

O save me, to the utmost save; deliver from every desire that does not centre in thy will.

May 9. Still my God forsakes not his needy creature, though unfaithful, and unfruitful:—blessed Lord, give a deeper sense of my infinite obligations, and greatly increase them. My mortal frame has, these eight days, rather impeded the lively exercises of the soul, and at times damped sensibly my *vigour* of mind; yet, through the good hand of my God upon me, I have had, and truly enjoyed, most delightful manifestations of Divine love. On last Monday evening, I felt, on entering the house of prayer, an universal damp overspread my soul, I almost regretted I had come out; but soon after, my God and Saviour drew nigh, and gave me to enjoy a plenitude of the Divine presence. In the morning of that day, while with those who I had reason to fear knew not the Lord, and admiring the beauties of nature, in her various productions, and her great exertions, the Lord Jesus in a moment manifested his presence, and instantly arrested all the attention I was paying to the work of his hands, and fixed it on *himself*. *Here* all the affectionate powers of my soul centred. On Wednesday morning, in secret, at a throne of grace, he, also, felt very nigh, made it a sweet time, and seemed to assure me he would be with me, when attempting to call on the Father through him. Soon after, when employed in this delightful exercise, and singing his praise, with one of his ministering servants, we found it a Bethel

indeed. God the Father and Son felt intimately nigh. Surely what the Lord gives at *one* time, he can give at *all* times. I was drawn out in strong desire that it might be so, in so far as humanity would permit. On Thursday, in public, heard a precious discourse from "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." What was said entirely agreed with my own experience: it was a profitable time: but in the evening, I proved a painful reverse, the corruptible body pressed down the soul. I could only lie, as a blank, in the hand of the Lord; unable for any vigorous exertions. I looked to Jesus, and enjoyed a smile. O how precious is he to my soul. In the course of these eight days, I have seen most plainly, the hand of the Lord made bare for me in several temporal concerns; meeting with difficulties, I looked to him for direction and wisdom; well knowing, that without this I could accomplish nothing, and that the best way to get help from the *creature*, was to apply to the Creator, and he literally answered me. I find not only in religious, but also in temporal things, he kindly condescends to my weaknesses, wants, and ignorances. For *this* reason it is, and *must* be, that I am carried through such multifarious business, most of which is far above my natural abilities. I sensibly feel my own weakness, and it is well I do, as it carries me often to a throne of grace, for wisdom and power, and as occasion calls, I obtain a small measure, sufficient for the time, and feel to whom I am indebted.

He inclines me to give him all the glory. Happy are those whose *God is the Lord.*

August 22. My God has shown great mercy since the 15th instant, many precious visits from on high. Last Friday, when much depressed, God the Father and Son drew graciously nigh, lifted up the hands that were hanging down, and confirmed the feeble knees. Blessed be his holy Name. On Saturday, when meditating on Divine things, Jesus broke in upon my soul, and gave a stronger testimony, by his Spirit, for sanctification, than for a considerable time past. On Sunday morning, I longed to go to the house of God; and when there, felt a strong hungering and thirsting for all the new-covenant blessings, and expected great things; of which a good and gracious Lord, at the Monday evening prayer-meeting, in some good measure made me taste. The adversary greatly withstood my going, but was conquered; and I was richly repaid by a profusion (if I may use the term,) of the Divine presence; deep, intimate fellowship with the Father and Son; which has continued with me in a measure to the present moment. How deep my obligations to redeeming love! Lord, carry on thy work in my soul, and fill me with holy, humble love. O make me more faithful, more fruitful, and more insensible to the trials of life. On Wednesday, in the prospect of being from home, and with those that perhaps know little of experimental religion, I cried to the Lord, to help me to be watchful, solemn, serious. I feared

grieving, in any degree, my gracious God, and felt very poorly in body and spirit; and O, how literally was I heard and assisted, so as to call forth gratitude and love. On Thursday, was unexpectedly tried in different ways, and especially by the want of the precious meeting of this day: but my God and Saviour was nigh, and this morning he has given me cause to praise him on my own account; and also on that of others. Notwithstanding all this goodness, yet "still heavy is my heart—still sink my spirits down." Lord, I commit all my griefs and cares to thee;—raise me above them;—let not the corruptible body press down the immortal soul.

November 28. Since the tenth of October, I have, by the appointment of him whose tender mercies are over all his works, suffered much in body, from a long disorder; with all its concomitants—weakness of nerves and spirits, flatness of mind, &c. to which has been added, various painful exercises; yet mixed with many mercies, for which I would be grateful.

December 5. Still my God continues, in a measure, to heal both soul and body, though slowly. He gives me sweetly to see his hand in many things daily, though not so much in the way of strong joy: yet, I feel my God is with me, ordering all things for me—levelling mountains—making rough places plain—disappointing my fears often,—frequently granting my desires, and giving more power and comfort in prayer; but still I feel weak as helpless infancy. Lord,

help me to trust more in thee. Years ago, the Lord promised me that I should not be careful in the year of drought or scarcity. That promise has, of late, often passed through my mind with a sweet consciousness that he is, in these days of great scarcity, preserving me from anxiety and sinful carefulness. He also is giving me clearly to see, that he is doing as he promised many months ago, (when a little embarrassed as to pecuniary matters, being disappointed where I expected assistance) that he himself would undertake my cause and help me; and of a truth he has done it. I desire also, with gratitude and humility, to record another proof of his goodness, yea two, respecting the great temporal concern he hath committed to me.

——26. By the good hand of my God upon me I am brought to the end of another eight days. I have reason to bless the Lord, that no remarkably distressing event has taken place in my family, or person, or connexions. My health is rather better, and my desires after God and his fullest salvation are increasing. Yesterday, in our meeting, I enjoyed a sweet sense of the Divine presence, so as to solemnize and tranquillize my mind; I was favoured with an unexpected, impressive view of the Sacred Trinity;—found all within confessing a present Deity. Every thought, for the time, was brought into willing subjection. In the evening, endeavouring to trust in the Lord, in the prospect of a trial, I was not disappointed, but was helped to rise above the

creature. Evermore, O God, may it be so, with respect to every person, place, and thing; and be thou all in all to me. In secret, in social, and in family prayer, have found it good, since last date, to draw nigh to God; but still, have not obtained all I asked, with respect to ending this year and beginning the next. Perhaps my God will come and leave a blessing; but he has given me, in mercy, unexpected opportunities of assisting the poor, and also most unexpected assistance as to pecuniary matters. O that it might be as the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil. I find much cause to grieve that I move so slowly in the good way, and do not improve, as I ought, all my advantages. Help, Lord, for the glory of thy Name; and come quickly, and grant my requests.

LETTER XC.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

REV. SIR, *February*, 1800.

I heard with regret, some little time ago, of your indisposition; and now take an opportunity of expressing, with much sincerity, my Christian sympathy. This sickness, I hope, is not unto death, but for the glory of God, to whose cause, for many years, you have devoted, and not in vain, your time, strength, and talents. A rich reward, not of debt but of grace, awaits you. But if it is *His will*, who cannot err, I hope and pray it will be at a much later period that he

shall dismiss you from your successful and happy toil. I am led to pray thus, for the sake of his people; many of whom you have been the honoured instrument, not only of leading to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin; but likewise, of directing into the clear view and *happy possession* of that *perfect love*, which excludes all tormenting fear.

Having thus fed many, I trust you feel now, while in a state of weakness, your own soul richly replenished with copious streams of pure love, and are sinking deeper and deeper into Deity:—that you are ripening apace for the granary above; that heavenly country, where the inhabitants say not, they are sick; where faith is lost in sight, and hope in full fruition. Hail, auspicious day! Till then, may our gracious God give us sweet foretastes of that perfect and eternal bliss.

My God lays me, though unworthy, under deep obligations, by his tender, bountiful dealings with my soul. I remember, with gratitude, the solid advantage I reaped from repeated conversations with you, a good many years ago, upon the delightful subject of *perfect love*. I was then in the ardent pursuit of it, though far from being fully instructed respecting its nature. Your views entirely coincided with mine; and by your valuable letters afterwards, these views were made more impressive; and, through the tender mercy of my God, I was enabled soon after to testify, from happy experience, the sovereign efficacy of the blood of Jesus.

Since then, I have much cause to praise him. He has considerably deepened my experience, and greatly extended my prospects, though yet I am very far short of the Christian standard. At times I am so let into Jehovah; permitted so to sink into Deity, as I can by no words express. My enjoyment is exquisite; but always guarded by a *sacred awe*. It is, indeed, a heaven of pure love, that lays the creature low, while yet every power of the soul seems expanded, and the whole heart enlarged, with keen desire, to grasp the INFINITE.

Lately, I have been unusually indulged with clear, impressive views of the whole *Godhead*—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. My perception of a Trinity of Persons, in the unity of essence, is so unclouded, as mortal language would in vain attempt to express. This great mystery, I have often thought, is not a proper subject for disputation. The line of human reason is by far too short to sound its depth. How infinitely indebted, then, are we to a gracious God, who gives his people such a clear view, and *firm* and *cordial belief* of the *actual existence*, of these THREE SACRED PERSONS, in the one undivided GODHEAD. Though we cannot define the *mode* of *this existence*, yet we are sweetly and deeply conscious of the different characters and offices which they sustain in the salvation of man. "They sweetly all agree to save a world of sinners lost." This we know, and also *experience*.

To my apprehension, my fellowship is sometimes with the Father *alone;* at others, with the

Son, and not seldom, with Father, Son, and Spirit. How great the mystery of godliness! O that I may be enabled fully to improve to the utmost this wonderful intercourse with Deity; aware that it is no further useful, than *as it proves of an assimilating nature.*

It will give me real satisfaction to hear, that Mr. M. is gaining ground of his complaints, either by his own or a borrowed pen. With Christian wishes for his recovery, and farther usefulness in the church of Christ, I remain his sincere well-wisher in the Lord Jesus Christ,

D. MAXWELL.

LETTER XCI.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

July 3, 1800.

I am sorry, to see by Miss Ritchie's kind letter, that I neglected to give any directions about the papers in her hands. Mr. Henshaw, who proposes going to Conference, is the bearer of this, and is so good as to say, he will bring them to Scotland when he returns. I am pleased to see, that that arm which is full of power, has raised you above the painful pressure caused by your brother's removal. Surely our God delighteth in the happiness of his children. "God is love." How deeply have I proved this, since my last to Miss R. My soul hath been fed as with marrow and fatness. Brought sensibly nearer to Jehovah,

I have had more of his fulness poured into my soul; such deep intimate fellowship with him, as no language can express: yet no rapturous joy. My experience never runs in this channel. It is all (though exquisite enjoyment) a solemn sacred awe, that, as it were, arrests all the powers of the mind, and keeps them as still as the grave before Jehovah; it fills the soul with a holy, religious recollection, self-possession, strong inward attraction, and silence. The personality of the Sacred Three continues clear, to my mind, as the noon-day: views of the whole God-head become more frequent, and more impressive;—Jesus condescends to talk with me; telling me, that "whatever I ask in his Name, it shall be done for me." He gives many powerful renewals of the life, and power, and comfort, that attended these precious words when he first spake them to my wondering soul. Many weeks after that memorable occasion, when I had no immediate expectation of hearing the voice of my heavenly Shepherd, though at the time I was earnestly requesting a promise respecting an affair I had much at heart, he broke in with sweet surprise, and said, "If I have said, ask what you will, and it shall be done, what need of a promise?" Much prayer, since then, has ascended for the church of Christ, and many, yea numberless individuals; and I must conclude, that whatever has been asked agreeably to his will shall be granted. All this goodness of the Lord has not prevented, but rather provoked the malice of the adverse powers, who

have done all they were permitted, to harass me; but the Name of the Lord is, I prove, a strong tower, to which I fly, and they dare not enter.

I am pleased to hear, that there has been a little revival of the work at Otley. We go on well here, upon the whole. The presence of the Lord prevails sensibly in the prayer-meetings, which are numerous; and he bears testimony to his word preached, and also to the dispensation of the sacrament of the supper; but still more remarkably does he appear in our little class here, and in the select band. I am, at present, obliged, after repeated interruptions, to conclude. With good wishes for still greater prosperity to your soul, and success in all your labours of love; that the Name of our God may be glorified from the rising to the setting sun, is the prayer of, dear Miss Ritchie's fellow-traveller to Zion,

D. MAXWELL.

1801—3.

Lady M—'s experience attains a greater uniformity—Diary continued.

We now enter upon the last ten years of Lady Maxwell's life. She continued, nearly to the

end, to write in her Diary as frequently, and as largely, as before; nor, till within a few weeks of her discontinuing to write, does there appear any failure, either in her diction, or in the *eligibility* of her hand. But, these years present such a *pleasing* uniformity of experience, as to render it unnecessary to multiply extracts. In the few which have been selected, the editor has endeavoured, as much as possible, to seize every variation of feeling, of exercise, or enjoyment, as recorded by her Ladyship. It will be seen, that she had eminently attained establishment in grace—that she was rooted, grounded, and settled in love; and happily found the work of righteousness to be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. In the course of these ten years, she frequently suffered from bodily indisposition; but "patience had its perfect work," and as her "outward man decayed, her inward man was renewed day by day." The nearer she approached the heavenly world, she endeavoured to become more and more "meet, for the inheritance among the saints in light," and was ever found waiting and watching for the coming of her Lord. Her love to God; her zeal for his cause; her compassion for souls; her efforts to serve the best interests of society; remained not only unabated, but, under the solemn impressions of a coming eternity, appear to have gradually acquired new energies, until her dismission was signed, and she called to take possession of an eternal reward. To the end of her pilgrimage she acknowledged herself an un-

profitable servant—an infinite debtor to free, unmerited grace: and her sole trust for final acceptance, and her only hope of eternal salvation, were founded on the atoning blood, and all prevalent intercession of Jesus Christ. His amazing condescension and love—his suitableness and all-sufficiency—the freeness and fulness of his grace, had for years been the delightful themes of her praise; and when she dropt mortality, it was to unite with the glorified spirits, in the eternal anthem, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

January 2. I bless the Father of Mercies, my comforts have rather increased since last date. Had, on last Lord's-day, the great privilege of entering the house of my God, and was enabled to attend without any uneasiness, either from the body, or the adversary of souls. My God is good; he often hears and answers my feeble petitions, offered up in his Son's name, though not always in faith. I had no particular blessing on the last day of the year, not being able to wrestle for it as usual till past twelve o'clock at night. But, in the morning, during secret prayer, my Jesus drew very nigh, and I was comforted; yea, Father, Son, and Spirit, felt with me; and I endeavoured to improve the precious visit from on high. In our little meeting, I most sensibly enjoyed a plenitude of the presence of the Sacred

Trinity. It was a most remarkable time; all present felt the presence of Deity. It abode with me all the evening, though the enemy did all he could to prevent it; and this day, I still feel a measure of it, though not with so much joy.

April 24. Unspeakably great has been the interposition of the Most High in behalf of Great Britain, according to gazetted accounts since last date. Lord, how wonderful is thy mercy to our guilty lands! Thou hast, in the most critical moment, removed by death another Potentate, perfectly hostile to the interests of Great Britain, and by this stroke weakened the strength of those powers leagued with him, and determined upon our destruction. Now, their purposes are broken off, thanks to a God of mercy. When, O Lord, we add to this extraordinary exertion of thy goodness, the happy consequences of it, which are incalculable; also, the great naval victory thou hast given us, *for it is thy doing*, over another Northern kingdom, whereby they are brought low, and their designs defeated; what can we say, but that, as a people, we are utterly unworthy of all this kindness which Thou hast made to pass before us. O, Father of Mercies, sanctify it to us, and by thy grace deliver us as a people from our sins! Turn us to thyself, by repentance and faith, that iniquity be not our ruin. Dispose all ranks among us to give thee the glory of all that has been done for us at this time. As an individual, my heart feels grateful to the Lord, and earnestly desirous it may be so, and that

multitudes may be converted by mercies, that threatened judgements have not reclaimed.

August 21. *Gardener's-Hall.* Since the 7th instant, have been in heaviness through manifold temptations. While in Edinburgh, my God gave me many precious times in private and public, and helped me through many unusual exertions. My spiritual enjoyments, since I came here, have greatly diminished, and fresh trials have occurred. I prove it a painful contrast. But shall I always receive good at the hand of the Lord, and never see evil? Vain expectation. The latter, by his blessing, is often mercy in disguise. God is rich in goodness to his people; and when, at any time, he afflicts, it is in *very* faithfulness. But he knows, when I prove him even at a partial distance, all nature wears a gloom: I can enjoy nothing. Come near, then, Holy God and true, and ever keep me near to thyself. O Jesus, where thou art is heaven, and no where else! Take full possession of me. O what goodness has the Lord made to pass before me for many years past! But especially of late years he has greatly disclosed to me the deep things of Deity, and given me a holy intimacy with unseen objects, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He has wrought out numberless deliverances for me; yea, performed all things for me; often exceeding my expectations, though enlarged. O that I could add, I have profited *in proportion!* have grown up into Christ my living Head in all things. I blush to

think how poor my progress. Speak, O my God, and it shall be so no more.

September 11. Still the Lord condescends to bless with a measure of health, and has, in much mercy, *fully* and *finally* delivered me from a protracted and teazing business, that has long tried me. It is *his* own doing, and to him be all the glory. In the course of a kind Providence, and under, I trust, Divine direction, I have been from home, for a short time, for health; after precious promises given for a blessing by the way, and my God preserved and brought home in peace, after some feeble attempts to do good on the road. On the day I came home I enjoyed a precious season, from the gracious presence of Deity, while conversing with a minister, which has continued, and has been repeated: especially on last Lord's-day morning in public, when, after much prayer and painful temptation, my God and Saviour felt wonderfully nigh, and my soul was filled with love Divine, and holy sacred awe, which continued for some time. On Monday evening, in my way to the prayer-meeting, my Jesus met me, and sweetly shed abroad his love in my heart; and in the chapel, the gracious presence of Father and Son abounded. I felt surrounded with Deity; filled with love and wonder; permitted with favoured John, as it were, to lean by faith on the dear Redeemer's breast. O, adorable Jesus, how astonishing thy goodness and condescension to thy people! O that I might prove more of the

sanctifying influences of these blessed communications!

December 25. Still the scale of mercy preponderates in my soul. On Sabbath last, in the morning, in public, on entering the house of God I felt the heavenly attraction strong and sweet, capecially in praise and prayer, under a discourse from the fourth verse of the third chapter of Ephesians,—"When Christ shall appear," &c. I felt much engaged in prayer for both speaker and hearers, and my God heard and comforted me by communion with himself and his dear Son, and by sweet, impressive views, of what was included in having Jesus as the life of the soul. And when the sure marks of true love to Christ were given, light from on high shone so clearly that I could easily read these characters within. Lord, make them much more conspicuous! On Thursday, it was a precious season: Deity drew very near—my perception of the Sacred Three was very clear—and my soul big with expectation of seeing greater things. Just after, enjoyed delightful conversation on the deep things of God. Lord, help me to press on! The increase of communion, bestowed on Lord's-day, still remains, and my mind feels staid on God. Blessed Lord, what shall I say? Thou art good beyond expression; yea, far beyond conception.

March 12, 1802. How difficult to write or speak upon the deep things of God. Since the fifth instant, the goodness of my God has been

great, beyond my pen to describe. On last Friday I felt truly in the Spirit; the heavenly attraction was strong. On Saturday, ministering to the Lord's poor was my happy employment. On Sabbath, with peculiar desire, I went to the house of prayer. During a discourse from the latter clause of the 13th verse of the first chapter of Ephesians, "In whom also, after that ye believed ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise," I felt much engaged with my God for a particular blessing, not for myself only, but for the speaker and hearers also, and he condescended to be easily entreated, and did literally answer. I had infinite cause to praise him. The Sacred Three drew very nigh; but more especially my fellowship was with *God the Spirit* more than ever formerly. O how much of the power of that Divine Agent did I feel! His energies were strong and very peculiar. I looked up, and asked to know what he was bestowing, and seemed to be answered, that he was *sealing* me as the *peculiar* property of Jehovah. I was so deeply engaged with the Holy Spirit, so intensely desirous to attend to his wonderful operations upon my mind, that every power and faculty felt upon the stretch. O my God, make me faithful to the many favours bestowed!

July 2. The tender mercies of my God have neither been few nor small since last date. The cry of my heart has daily and hourly been to him for *more* grace—for *all* grace. The enemy has opposed, and tried;—but God is above men and

devils. How great the power of prayer! How delightful to prove *him* the hearer of it! I cry unto him, and he, in much mercy, answereth, both as to temporal and spiritual mercies. I have been favoured with many sweet proofs of this, this last week. How great my obligations! I do feel them. He carries me through every difficulty. When persons, places, or things, are necessary, he condescends to provide them; when providential dispensations are rich, and pleasing, he prevents me from taking too much complacency in them. I can truly say, that the *greatest* satisfaction I feel in them is, their bearing so evidently the Divine signature. As I advance in the good way, my God increases my light, widens my prospects, and calls me to come up higher.—Through mercy I do get sweetly near to him by the Lord Jesus, the *only way*; and I *desire no other*. I prove him very precious. I dwell under the covert of this Rock, and am secure. O to drink deeper into his Spirit!

October 29. Though confined almost constantly since last date, the ninth inst. it has yet been a season wherein I have had much cause for praise, unceasing praise. O how has the scale of Divine love preponderated! While afflicted in body, how has my God compassed me about with his gracious presence, and precious promises; not only for natural life, but also that my soul should prosper; that my bodily complaints should be over-ruled for his glory, and I spared to be an ornament to his church. Amen. Lord,

all things are possible to thee. O bless me with that degree of faith that smiles at impossibilities, and says, it shall be done. For some weeks past, I have felt as if come, by faith, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. O to be able to praise my God as I wish: I would my every breath was prayer and praise. Speak, Holy Father, and it shall be so. Yesterday, in conversation with a Christian friend or two, the Divine presence so filled the place, and also my soul, as is impossible to express. I adore the great *meritorious Cause* of these great privileges. O Lamb of God, what hast thou done for sinners! *Eternity* alone can develope the great mystery of thy inexpressible love. While in the body, how little are we capable of receiving.

December 17. Since the 8th instant, my spiritual enjoyments have rather increased, as have also my bodily strength and spirits. During this tedious illness, I have been kept dreading too great attention to the body; and have felt grateful, for some days past, to feel that I am gradually rising, by returning health, above these paltry concerns. I would always live in a spirit of sacrifice. Still confined from the house of God, I feel my loss, and look forward with comfort to the enjoyment of that privilege. Of late have found secret prayer, and searching the Scriptures, sources of increasing comfort. Yesterday, the Lord was sweetly present with me in the morning, and greatly comforted me through the channel of his

word, and also while joining a few Christian friends in prayer, praise, and Christian conference. Afterward, in company with a larger circle, with gratitude I would acknowledge the goodness of the Lord, in giving a greater power to speak of the deep things of God than I expected, considering my present weakness. O that I might love him more. Speak, Lord, and it shall be so: kindle a stronger flame of Divine love than ever in my heart: ever keep it alive.

February 25, 1803. On taking up my pen, at this time, to make mention of the goodness of my God, I feel my heart going out after him, and all that degree of his fulness that the feeble powers of humanity can admit. O Lord, what is man that thou hast been so mindful of him; made such ample, yea, superabounding provision for his eternal welfare; and while in this vale of tears, does so graciously and so frequently give him to drink of the brook by the way; whereby his head is lifted up, and a song of praise put in his mouth? Thou dost, blessed Lord, greatly magnify the riches of thy grace in thy dealings with thy people: O for a heart to praise thee: O let my every word, thought, act, be praise. Detained last Lord's-day from his house, which I felt a keen trial, but I was favoured with the most delightful meditations upon, and enjoyment by faith of future glory. It is impossible to express the clear and powerfully impressive views I had, of the Father and the Son, seated on the throne of glory; but I look for

far greater things, as it repects conformity to the Divine Image. This my soul thirsteth for with vehement desire. Condescend, Holy Father, to fulfil these desires; surely they are implanted by thy Spirit. Enjoyed repeated opportunities, these days past, of endeavouring to do good to saints and sinners. Lord, thou canst bless the most inadequate means, and thereby render them effectual. On Thursday, felt rather cast down, from various natural causes; I cried unto the Lord, who in tender compassion gave ear unto my supplications, and dealt most bountifully with me, and those present. He made it a time of great refreshing, by a plenitude of the Divine presence. My whole soul felt deeply solemnized. The vale of the temple seemed to be rent, and access given to enter into the holy of holies. I feel truly unworthy of all his goodness. Blessed Jesus, it is bestowed for thy sake; make and keep me humble. I feel, I bless God, I *deeply* feel my poverty; mercies bestowed do not make me high-minded. The higher I am raised by these frequent and precious manifestations, the deeper I seem to sink: may it ever be so.

May 27. The increase of nearness to, and communion with Deity, with which I was favoured, on Monday the 23d, through the goodness of my God, still continues, though the adversary has made various attempts to rob me of it. Yet, I am constrained to follow on; I cannot rest in what is already bestowed. My views grow more extensive of the privileges of Christians, of that

holy familiarity with Deity, Christ has purchased for them; of those superior degrees of conformity to the Divine Image those may expect, who through grace are determined to be *all* for God; to seek and find their all in him. My feeble pen cannot describe all I see by faith on this subject; I also sweetly taste of it. O that both may continue and increase.

September 23. The *Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.* Here is a solid source of consolation, amidst all these shakings of the nations, these violent attempts for the subversion of all order and good government; these subtle, various, and satanical endeavours to destroy the belief of the *truth* as it is in *Jesus;* yea, to undeify the great Author of life and salvation; and thereby, if possible, to rob the Christian of his well-grounded hope of eternal happiness. How vain all these feeble attempts. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision; He shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The *foundation* Jehovah hath laid for the hope of his people, standeth sure: the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. Lord, open the eyes of deluded sinners, before their feet stumble upon the dark mountains; and O may I praise thee *now,* and through all *eternity,* that thou hast opened *mine,* not only to *see* my danger, but to *escape* it; and also allowed me such delightful communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, and still keeps me pressing on. Lord, quicken my pace.

1804—7.

Diary continued.

January 27. Still the monument of sparing mercy, and still much cause given me to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," for past and present favours. How grateful ought I to be. Last Lord's-day morning, in secret, I was led to plead for much of the Divine presence. In my way to the house of God, I looked up for the answer of prayer, and not in vain. The Sacred Three drew divinely near; and still nearer, when singing the praises of my God. In public, I seemed to get in spirit above all created good; my soul soared beyond the skies. The subject under discussion afforded much profit and delight: the Lord shone gloriously upon my soul, and my spiritual enjoyment was exquisite. I proved my union with the Lord Jesus inexpressibly intimate and close; while my views of the Father and the Holy Spirit were as clear, to the eye of faith, as the sun in his meridian brightness; and, at the same time, most impressive: this continued for some days.

May 25. I have been confined to the house with a severe cold, but had much cause to bless the Father of Mercies that he gave me health to

attend at the annual examination of my week-day school. I had the satisfaction of dismissing a goodly number of scholars well taught, and of putting into the hand of *each* that sacred Volume, which, with the blessing of the Lord, is able to make them wise to salvation. O God, seal the truth it contains upon each of their hearts; and, O give thy peculiar countenance to those now received to supply their place. Without *this*, all my attempts to profit my fellow-creatures, whether old or young, will prove ineffectual. Encouraged by thy faithful word of promise, that I shall turn many to righteousness, however unlikely, speaking after the manner of men, I desire to be found continually occupied in whatever has either a more immediate or remote tendency to effect this great purpose. Though prevented the use of the public means of grace this week, yet my God has been gracious; he has been ever with me. Yesterday, he was unspeakably good during our little meeting. Some time before it, when looking up to him for his presence, a most solemn sense of eternal things rested upon my mind; much sacred awe filled my breast; and when engaged, he gave me liberty to speak of the deep things of God, as felt in my own soul, and I trust under an unction from on high. How great my obligations! How poor my returns!

September 28. I have reason to think, that the work of grace in my soul is going forward. My intercourse with Deity increases: my God deals most tenderly and liberally with me. May

I to the utmost improve his condescending goodness. He has, in a sensible manner, heard my prayer, put up on the 2d instant. I do feel more *independent* of the *creature;* of course, I *rely* more on the *Creator*, and not in vain. Lord, I would, more closely and humbly than ever, walk with thee. Increase my power. Have had several sweet seasons since last date. Yesterday, especially, my heart felt lifted up, when speaking of the things of God. I was deeply impressed with a sense of his astonishing love, in the redemption of sinners; and enjoyed unusual liberty of speech, when dwelling on the pleasing, the delightful theme. But, O, how little of that vast plan can our limited powers take in; even angels themselves, these bright intelligences, far superior to man, are represented as desiring to look into, and deeply to consider this stupendous mystery. Surely Jehovah himself alone knows the height and depth of it.

October 19. The God of all grace and consolation still remembers his unworthy creature for good. On Lord's-day morning, in public, I did not wait upon my God in vain. On Monday, all day, I enjoyed a plenitude of the gracious presence of the Trinity. What clear notice of the truth of this mysterious doctrine does the Lord impress upon my mind! What comforts flow from it! Yet, I seldom make it a subject of discussion, though I firmly believe it. My limited powers may not be able to conceive how *Three* Persons can exist in *one numerical* essence;

nor am I called to it: *God hath said it*, and that is enough. The delightful fellowship I enjoy, with each of these Sacred Persons, brings with it a deeper and more experimental conviction of the *truth* of the doctrine, than ten thousand most conclusive arguments could ever effect.

December 28. For these days past, I have been asking of my God to grant me a token for good, before the expiration of this year; and of a truth, he has heard and answered my request, oftener than once. More especially, on Tuesday morning, in public, when singing his praises before sermon, *Jehovah* not only drew nigh in all the grandeur of Deity, but his glory seemed to fill the place. No language can express *what* I *felt*, or *how* I felt. I have had *many* solemn manifestations of the kind, but *this* exceeded them all: wonder, and love, pervaded my whole soul, while I sunk into nothing before the great I AM. O that great and good ends may be answered by it.

February 9, 1805. Through the tender mercy of my God, I have been enabled to make many exertions in the path of duty, in the course of these last eight days, which to nature appeared most formidable; but, through Divine aid, I easily accomplished them. Have also gained several victories over *self* in the same way. Help, Lord, to retain the ground gained. Yesterday, the Lord drew very sweetly near, while calling on him in our little meeting. It is truly in general a very profitable one, and no less comfortable. How

uniformly does the God we love, and endeavour to serve, favour us with his gracious presence; not only during the meeting, but in conversation after it. These two last Thursdays, I felt uncommonly stirred up; yea, as it were, impelled to press on my own heart, and the hearts of all present, the great necessity of living for eternity. How trifling and insignificant the things of time, when compared with those of an eternal world.

September 13. Since the 2d ult. I have been confined to my chamber, and much to my bed; my mind has been flat; my spirits weak; and my nerves a good deal affected, by the effects of a fever. Yet, through the tender mercy of God, the adversary is in a great measure chained up. How good is the Father of Mercies! He is again, as often formerly, beginning to restore me to a measure of health, though very slowly. How many the temporal mercies enjoyed in this long season of affliction. Every outward accommodation, kindness, and all proper medical assistance, &c. &c. O for gratitude! Yesterday, my God drew near; Jehovah came down, and my soul rejoiced. O Lord, come nearer still; fully restore and perfect what concerns body, soul, spirit, and outward estate.

—— 27. Through mercy, I still live, and continue to gain a little upon my bodily affliction, and experience many mercies; but still languor of mind and weakness of nerves try me. At times, my God draws near: he did so yesterday, (Thursday,) and answered prayer. I trust it is only an

alteration of *enjoyment*, not of *possession*; but even *this* is painful. O my God, quickly come, and fill with all thy communicable fulness. I am thankful for power to speak for God, and the profit of my fellow-creatures. Lord, follow *simple language* with *Divine power*; then shall thy promise be fulfilled: that I shall "turn many from darkness to light, and strengthen the brethren." How insipid is all created good without intimate fellowship with Deity! My mind is at present exercised about some important business, which affects my spirits; though the Lord has condescended to favour me with many precious promises respecting the success of it. Forgive me, gracious Father, and make me stronger in the faith.

December 13. Since last date, I have, through rich mercy, enjoyed much communion with Deity, more especially with *Jehovah*. O how inexpressibly delightful! What a heaven of silent love! I prove in a small degree that the continual view of infinite Excellency, tends greatly to refine the moral taste; to expand and enlarge the powers of the soul; and gives more and more extensive views of the perfections of Deity. But, while in the body, how little can we take in; how very limited are our views of these glorious objects. Lord, enlarge my scanty thought to know the wonders of thy love; and unloose my stammering tongue, to tell of them under a Divine influence. On Lord's-day morning, God was good to his unworthy creature in his

house of prayer; and just afterwards, opened my mouth in private, to speak to the case of a distressed Christian, who had laboured long in the furnace of the most painful temptations. She is since in a great measure delivered, and has been favoured with glorious views of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as her portion. On this occasion it appeared more clearly to me than ever formerly, that God had condescended to put his words in my mouth. On Thursday, during our class-meeting, I had a precious time; when speaking of his loving-kindness, the fire of Divine love was sensibly increased in my soul, and in the hearts of those present: O for gratitude.

March 14, 1806. He whose tender mercies are over all his works, hath made bare his holy arm in my behalf, since the 7th instant. The trial then mentioned, he hath removed in a very unexpected manner. Neither his kingdom, nor the accomplishment of his will, cometh by observation. He gently leads to the adoption of measures, sometimes at the suggestion of others, and often by the most simple means; and, in the use of these, brings about the desired end, having previously given faith to believe for success. How wonderful are thy ways, O, thou God of love! I may add, how precious is faith, not only in the Divine life, but in the things of the present life. Lord, increase my faith, and perfect what thou hast begun, respecting the business now mentioned, and much more in the accomplishment of these precious promises for matters of

much greater importance. Found it truly good to wait on God in public last Lord's-day, and to sit down at his Son's table; but much better since, as he has so quickly granted one of my requests then put up, and added much comfort with it to my soul, with some increase of faith. O to be grateful.

October 17. A God of love is still, from time to time, shewing me mercy, and repeating the visits of his love. O how delightful these seasons. If any thing can be more so, it is that intercourse with which I am often favoured with the whole Deity: language cannot express what is then enjoyed. The soul is as if absorbed in the Godhead; surrounded with it; and all within bows before the Triune God, with the deepest humility, the most profound solemnity, and indescribable serenity: the creature seems for the time lost, in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, One God, JEHOVAH. How little, then, does every earthly thing appear! O my God, let it be ever thus with me; then I shall be better fitted for doing and suffering all thy holy will. Last Lord's-day morning, in public, it was truly a profitable and comfortable time. In a moment, the Lord seemed to favour me with a retrospect of his dealings with me, since he first called me to seek his face, and gave me to see, it was mercy all; and that he had not permitted me wickedly to depart from him: yea, he gave me a sweet witness from on high, that, from the beginning to the present moment, I never had had one serious thought of

departing from my God. But while I speak thus, I feel I have been unfaithful, unworthy, and unfruitful. Perhaps one great preservative has been a fear continually of coming short. From the first, I was deeply sensible of my danger; I durst not trust myself one moment, and, therefore, kept aloof from persons, things, and places. But, as human nature is prone to extremes, it is possible I carried this too far. Yet, upon a retrospect, I am inclined to think, I did not lose by living so much in the spirit of sacrifice. I do not say, that this plan is necessary *for all*; but I found it so for me, and I now bless my God that he thus led me. Perhaps what suggested these meditations was, the portion of Scripture spoken from iid chapter of Jeremiah, 17th to the 19th verse.

March 27, 1807. Still have cause to bless the God of grace and consolation for many mercies, known and unknown, since last date; though my spiritual joys have not been so strong as the week before. Two *great events*, as to public affairs, have taken place very recently, which ought to make the hearts of Christians rejoice, and fill their lips with the high praises of God; namely, 1st, *The total abolition of the slave-trade by Great Britain*. Its long continuance has been the disgrace of our island. May the *Most High* crown the *noble deed* with his blessing, that it may be productive of all these happy and most important consequences that are expected from it. 2dly, The other event is also of great magnitude. The rejection

of the *Roman Catholic Bill* by both Houses of Parliament. Blessed be God, who hath given firmness to our King, and a large majority, in favour of both these measures. O God, what praise is due to thee! O pour out a spirit of prayer and gratitude upon all thy own people in our island, for thy great goodness to us in these respects: do thou enable us all to profit by it, and to shew our gratitude by our obedience and love to Thee.

April 25. Through mercy, I still find the Lord inviting me to come forward, to enjoy *more fully* the rich blessings the adorable Saviour hath purchased for his people. His condescension has operated powerfully and sweetly on my heart, and greatly encouraged me to expect greater things than ever. My love to God has been increased, and to my blessed Jesus. My earnest thirst after entire conformity to the Divine image is strengthened. Come, O Eternal God, and give me the permanent possession of all thou hast so clearly shown me is thy will concerning me; let nothing hinder. I have been favoured, these days past, with delightful meditations on these deep things of God; and also, at different times, with sweet communion with Deity, *alone*, and when with *others*; and have had most pleasing sensations from the strong hope of the gospel being sent to very distant parts, where as yet no missionary exertions have been made. Blessed God, realize these hopes, and give great, exceeding great success, that the multitudes of Blacks, and of the swarthy sons and daughters of Africa, may be

brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. They have long been enveloped in worse than Egyptian darkness, and their miseries have been greatly increased by the hellish cruelty of those who purchased and enslaved them. Yet, through the tender mercy of a gracious God, many individuals amongst them have had their slavery sweetened, by being brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; and now, that the slave-trade is abolished, and these opportunities lost thereby of hearing the gospel preached, what an unspeakable mercy will it be, if a merciful God, who is no respecter of persons, so orders matters as that the gospel shall be brought to them in their own countries.

September 25. I hope I may venture to say, that my most gracious God and heavenly Father does not permit me at any time to be without sweet fellowship with himself; or if in the least interrupted, there is either a hungering and thirsting for it, or an inward grieving for my loss, and a constant hope, more or less, of its return, which is very seldom disappointed. Some days of last week, I mourned, because I felt a partial distance from the grand Source of all human bliss; but soon the Father of Mercies, the God of all grace and consolation, heard and answered my cries. On entering his house last Lord's-day morning, which I esteemed a great privilege, after an absense of some weeks, I was enabled to join the great congregation, and what was much better, to sing his praise with grace in my

heart; a Divine *something* seemed to thrill through my whole frame; but what I felt under a discourse from, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," *eternity* alone can explain or express. O, if I attempt to use the moderate language of humanity, there was an indescribable degree of union with the whole Deity; a depth of exquisite communion and fellowship with each of the Sacred Three;—an uncommon, experimental, impressive view of the *Unity of Essence*, and *Trinity of Persons*. All this continued during the whole service, yea, the whole day; and to the present moment, I feel a measure of it. But, O, when I consider the goodness of my God in favouring me with this wonderful display of his greatness, glory, and goodness, at this time, I am led to adore and bless his holy Name, with my whole heart. I was ignorant, but he knew how soon I was to hear unexpected and doleful tidings of the near approach of death, to a beloved and only sister, and also of a brother equally near the confines of eternity. Nature ought to feel, and, "unreproved, she may drop a tear." Religion does not destroy the human passions and affections, but refines them. I bless my God, my mind was kept composed, much drawn out in prayer; and, O, how I ought to praise my Lord, who has given me such well-grounded hopes that my dear sister and brother will be eternally happy. Blessed be the Name of my gracious God. O holy Father, thou hast often given me clear, soul-satisfying

views of the happiness of not a few of those thou hast called hence at different times; if thou seest it meet, allow me this privilege, when my dear sister and brother shall leave this vale of tears.

November 27. I have great cause to praise a God of love, who is the hearer of prayer; and who has so fully granted my request, respecting my dear sister's departure from this vale of tears. I was, at her desire, in some measure, frequent, and fervent at a throne of grace, that she might die happy; that her faith might not fail, being at that time increased; and truly it did not fail. Her joy for weeks before her death was unspeakable. Holy, sacred awe, sweetly tempered with a large proportion of Divine love, seemed to prevade her whole soul, till she dropt the mantle of mortality, and entered into the paradise of God: that intermediate space, where blood-bought souls remain till the final judgement, when they shall enter into the joy of their Lord, which is unspeakable and full of glory; when they shall enjoy *the beatific vision*, and be made pillars in the temple of our God, to go no more out. Blessed Jesus, what hast thou suffered and done for thy people!

December 12. He who cannot err, still sees meet to keep me from the means of grace, by severity of weather, and delicacy of health, by which I suffer both in body and mind. O may I be kept from every unnecessary degree of attention to the body, and also obtain the sanctified

use of every providential dispensation. I endeavour to make my confinement, through grace, profitable to my fellow-creatures, by a deeper attention to the wants of the poor, especially the Lord's people, in this extreme cold and severe weather; and during the high price of every necessary of life, even to a threatening of famine. Lord, enlarge my powers of action herein, and give heavenly wisdom. As a nation, we have had very uncommon losses at sea, both of men and property; and the clouds are dark indeed, which seem to hang over our heads, as it regards political matters; besides an unprecedented spirit of revolution, which has appeared in several nations, and still threatens others, almost to the subversion of all regular governments. Thus situated, how natural to think, that even the most unconcerned would be brought to consider: but, alas, it is not so; nothing short of sovereign grace can change the heart of sinners. O blessed God, with whom is the residue of the Holy Spirit, do thou then pour him out in all his diversified operations, that the thoughtless may be awakened, convinced, and converted; and thy own people built up in their most holy faith: and, O Lord, do thou greatly enlarge my spiritual borders.

1808—10.

Diary concluded—Lady Maxwell's last Illness and Death—Letter on, by the Honourable Miss Napier—Inscription on Monumental Tablet.

March 19. On last Lord's-day, I enjoyed the great privilege of being not only in the house of God, but of being richly fed with spiritual food, while there, from these words: "Lord, I am thine, save me; I have sought thy precepts." It is impossible for me to say how exquisite was my enjoyment of the whole Deity, during this discourse. I was favoured with uncommon fellowship and nearness to the Sacred Three: but eternity alone can fully unfold and define what the Christian feels on these wonderful and blessed occasions. Meditating upon it, brings back in some measure a renewal of it. O my God, let me prove in some degree its transforming nature. Yesterday, (Thursday,) I was again favoured with the presence of the Holy Trinity in our little meeting; but not in such a high degree: my comfort was rather damped by the weight of a very unexpected trial in the morning; but he who afflicteth not willingly, soon lightened the load. Blessed Lord, how tenderly dost thou deal with thy children.

June 16. GOD IS LOVE. O how great his goodness. Since the ninth instant he has, in much mercy, increased his love in my heart. He favoured me with the great privilege of entering his house last Lord's-day, when he made much of his goodness to pass before me; greatly more than I had reason to expect. I was fed with marrow and fatness. Intimate fellowship and communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. I felt as in the immediate presence of Deity. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. On Thursday, during our meeting, as soon as I bowed my knees, looked up to the Father of Mercies, and inwardly pleaded for much of the Divine presence; the Sacred Three drew nigh; a solemn Divine awe overspread my mind; all within deeply felt, "God is here." It was indeed a memorable season. O my God, hasten the time when it shall always be so, and when every such visit from on high shall greatly increase holiness of heart and life, and, of consequence, greater intercourse with heaven. This is what my soul hungers and thirsts after.

September 10. Since the 26th of August, I have felt variously. I have been favoured, at times, with precious visits from above: my best times are in the house of my God; and, on Thursdays, at home, in secret prayer and meditation; likewise, in conversing on the things of God, with strong desires for the eternal welfare of others. O to be faithful and successful! On these

occasions I find an earnest desire, and this proves a strong stimulus to speak. By nature I am rather shy; but I find, in general, I obtain such assistance from on high, when thus employed, that conquers nature, and procures additional comfort to my own soul. Last Lord's-day I had an opportunity of remembering the dying love of my adorable Saviour, which was a time of refreshing. I felt ashamed and grieved that I did not feel my heart overflowing with grateful love to him, who had done so much for me: but O the riches of free grace! in a moment the whole Deity drew near: I felt surrounded, yea encircled in the Divine arms; I was lost in sacred astonishment and love. The whole powers of my soul were arrested, and a holy awe pervaded my mind, while I seemed to sink into Jehovah, and felt lost in his immensity. O adorable Saviour, how infinite the blessings thou hast purchased even for the fallen race of Adam! Why is not my poor heart every moment burning with the sacred fire of Divine love and gratitude to thee? I lose myself, and into nothing fall before thee. O compassionate thy poor creature! Enlarge my receptive powers, and keep them continually on the stretch.

December 31. Since the 22d of October, in general, my experience of Divine things has not been so rich as before that period. My health has been impaired, and my confinement more than usual: yet, my God has been good; allowed me many precious seasons in public, private, and

secret. My heart has been much drawn out to assist the poor, and to alleviate every species of distress among my fellow-creatures in these trying times, more especially the religious poor. Lord, increase my ability! Thou hast given me a willing heart.

January 7, 1809. The God of all grace and consolation has lengthened out my life another year, and in the course of twelve months past, has given me much cause to praise him for his goodness to my soul; for almost continual fellowship with the *whole* Deity, still *superior* to what he allowed me in the former year, though that was also great. I have enjoyed an *increase* of *sacred awe, solemn serenity, holy liberty*, and *inexpressible purity of happiness*. I would almost say, similar to what the blessed above enjoy. O my God, how do I *sink* in my own eyes when I consider my poverty of returns for all this profusion of goodness. I am lost in amazement, that thou hast so long borne with me; but the cause is, thou art *God*, whose tender mercies are over all thy works, and *Jesus hath died*, the great propitiation for sin. Blessed God, for his sake grant me more power to *love* and serve thee.

July 21. Still my God appears in my behalf. One day this week, I felt rather a degree of unwillingness to do what I had some small reason to think was the will of God. I hesitated, and asked the Lord to lead me into his will. In a few minutes, my God appeared in my behalf, and gave me a sweet persuasion, that if asked agree-

ably to my present light, he would soon interpose in a way that would fully satisfy me as to the business in hand. This soon determined me to go forward with cheerfulness; and O, how soon did my God, who is ever faithful, answer for himself. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his Holy Name." Surely it is good for me to *trust* in *Jehovah*. O my Heavenly Father, strengthen my faith, and enable me to go forward with greater speed. And if it is thy holy will, enlarge my temporal borders, that I may be more able to help the poor and the friendless, especially thy people. Thou hast given me a heart from my youth thus disposed. O give increasing power; and, O Lord, give thy richest blessing to my week-day charity-school, in Edinburgh. I have *reason* to believe that thou didst direct to it, when I asked of thee to shew me what I could do for thy cause. It has been opened a good many years, and about *eight hundred children*, boys and girls, have been taught, by *various* teachers, every branch of education proper for their line of life, and every possible attempt used to secure the salvation of their immortal souls. Blessed Lord, command thy blessing, and then real good shall be done.

October 7. Still far behind, and deeply conscious of it; yet my God is good. On Sunday last he exceeded my expectations, for which I felt grateful. But when, Lord, wilt thou satisfy the longing desires of my soul. O hasten the happy time when I shall feel all that conformity

to the Divine Image that the present imperfect state, where the immortal soul is lodged in a tenement of clay, will permit. Yesterday, found it profitable to listen to an account given by one or two valuable ministers in the Methodist connexion, respecting what God had done for their souls. They are a highly favoured body of Christians, both ministers and people. I meet with none, who enjoy so much of the comforts of religion, of communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, as they do; nor with any that have such clear views of the blessings of the new and everlasting covenant.*

* Such was the testimony of LADY MAXWELL, after a long and intimate acquaintance with the venerable Founder of Methodism, and several others of his pious coadjutors; and after having watched with an enlightened and discriminating eye the principal movements of this body of Christians for nearly half a century: a testimony surely sufficient to *neutralize* for ever the low ribaldry and blasphemy of the "Vicar of Manachan," and to outweigh the ten thousand false deductions, which either have been, or yet may be made, by the purblind metaphysics of a certain semi-infidel school; even though these should be arrayed with all the fascinations of genius, and have the ponderous name of some far-famed Poet Laureate thrown with them into the scale. But Lady M—'s testimony, it will be said, can only be considered as *ex-parte* evidence. It may, therefore, just be fair to add the following historical sketch, recently drawn by the able pencil of one who will not be accused of *party* attachment. "Contemplate the progress of *Methodism*, from its small beginnings, under its indefatigable Founder. That system, which reckons nearly half a million members, and a thousand preachers;

February 2, 1810. Still confined from the house of my God, which I prove a considerable loss. I long to get there, and to enjoy the deep, the delightful fellowship with which I have been so often favoured:—it is a heaven upon earth. O God, restore me to it again, if it is thy holy will and pleasure! But thou art every where present. Yesterday, Father, Son, and Spirit, were most graciously near. Lord, where *thou art is heaven*. Give me, O Lord, to feel *this* every moment. I desire to be grateful for what I have enjoyed, and do enjoy of it. Help me, blessed Lord, to profit more by it!

—— 16. Still my gracious God preserves me, and, from time to time, allows me sweet fellowship with Father and Son. What a great blessing! On last Thursday, I was highly favoured in this respect, and those who were with me. Jehovah was sensibly and most graciously nigh.

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which can speak of scholastic learning and pulpit eloquence, inferior to none of any other denomination; which has its missionaries in every quarter of the globe; which is continually and deservedly rising in public esteem, was, about seventy years ago, confined to two ministers, and some thirty or forty members, who had to work their way against the brutal violence of the mob, the injustice of magistrates, the frowns of lukewarm Christians, and the contempt of avowed infidels. The history of this indefatigable, zealous, and useful denomination will stand to the end of time, as a check to the despondency, and an encouragement to the hopes of those who are anxious to glorify God in seeking the salvation of their fellow-creatures.—*Vide a Sermon, preached for the benefit of the Port of London Society, May 9, 1820, by the* Rev. J. A. James.

O my God, let these precious visitations prove much more transforming than ever. I long for this. Speak, Lord, and it shall be so: and O, make me more useful to others!—strengthen my delicate frame;—fill me with faith and with the Holy Ghost.

March 2. Upon a survey of the last eight days, they have not been very comfortable. I have felt at a partial distance from the source of my happiness. My body has been afflicted; my nerves and spirits the same. O my God, when not happy in *Thee*, all within feels an aching void. O Lord, remove whatever hinders that *close* communion with Deity, with which thou dost so highly favour me in general. On Thursday last, thou didst deal favourably with me, for which I would praise thee. O that it might be the beginning of better days than ever yet I have enjoyed, if it is thy holy will;—and O, my gracious God, restore me to thy house of prayer. I long for this. Amen, and Amen."

With the above passage, written in a manner scarcely legible, her Ladyship's Diary was closed. Her right hand forgat its cunning. Her race was nearly run: but her lamp was trimmed, her light was burning, and the Bridegroom was at the door. Instead of being restored to God's earthly tabernacle, her Divine Master, whom she had so faithfully served, was preparing her triumphant soul speedily to join the assembly of glorified spirits around his throne. For some

years her constitution had manifested symptoms of decay, and had imposed upon her more than ordinary attention to her health. From the latter part of the preceding year, her weaknesses had greatly increased; and in the early part of the spring of this year, her decline was accelerated by an almost total loss of appetite. "And, although every aid of medicine was tried, administered by the hand of a most able physician, who had long attended her, and to whom the peculiarities of her constitution were well known, yet her appetite could not be restored. Nothing, however, appeared to indicate a speedy dissolution until within about a fortnight of her death, when one night she became so very feverish, and her pulse so high, that it was seriously feared that the time of her departure was come. At this time, her attendant requested that she might be permitted to call in some of her Ladyship's relations, but received for answer, 'No; it will hurry me. I feel such a Divine calm, that I wish not to be disturbed.' She afterwards recovered a little, but being incapable of taking nourishment, her delicate frame gradually sunk. She was frequently visited, about this time, by the Wesleyan minister then in the city, to whom she appeared to suffer no pain of body, nor mental decay. She expressed her hearty thanks for every little attention which was shewn to her, and poured her solemn benedictions on all who came near her. As she was so very weak, the minister who visited her, did not urge her to speak, but

when she inclined to it of her own accord. Having on one occasion joined with her in prayer, he left her abruptly, as she appeared to be engaged in some mental exercise; when, as soon as he was gone, the physician came in, and inquired how she felt herself; she thanked him for all his kindness and attention, but assured him that her mind was so absorbed in Divine things, that she could neither speak of the body nor of the world. At another time, she was asked by the minister how she was, but she had only strength to say, "God is with me." Two days before her death, he called upon her, when she desired him to be seated, and appeared very wishful to speak, but her strength was gone. She was only able to say, that through her affliction she had "had no painful exercise of mind;"—that her "confidence was unshaken," and her "peace inexpressibly sweet." She was visited again on the day that she died, when, without pain, and in the perfect use of her senses and faculties, she seemed to be gently breathing herself away; and on the afternoon of the same day, while one of the ministers of the city was engaged with her in prayer,

"She took her last triumphant flight,
From Calvary's to Zion's height."

Thus died Lady Maxwell, July 2d, 1810, in which the society to which she belonged lost its oldest member, the world one of its best inhabitants, and the church universal, throughout the earth, one of its brightest ornaments."

The following letter, addressed to a friend of her Ladyship, by the Honourable Miss Napier, will throw further light on this painful, blissful, parting scene.

TO MRS. C——.

Castle-street, Edinburgh,
July 14, 1810.

MADAM,

Knowing the great regard which beloved Lady Maxwell entertained for you, I cannot resist writing a few lines to inform you of an event that will doubtless give you *real pain*. Her dear Ladyship died on the 2d instant. Her health had gradually declined, ever since last November. Three of the most eminent physicians attended her, who apprehended no danger till within six weeks of her death. She died, blessed woman, as she had lived, rejoicing in the God of her salvation, and in the full assurance of eternal happiness.

She was quite aware of her situation, and told me, that from the time she was taken ill, she was fully persuaded death was in the cup: but from tenderness to me, she never adverted to the subject, till within a fortnight of her death. From that time till she departed, her conversation was more like that of an inhabitant of heaven, than of one still encumbered with a body of clay. She expired without a sigh, struggle, or groan; and this was literally in answer to prayer. I had been long her selected confidential friend, as well

as her relation; had lived under the same roof with her for some years, and slept in the same room; so that to me this event is most mournful. But I am convinced the change to her is so glorious, that I ought to turn my tears into hymns of joy.

I do endeavour to comfort myself by reflecting on what she is now enjoying. I doubt not but many hymns were sung on her entrance into her heavenly Father's kingdom, and that a celestial host conducted her to her Saviour, to her King, and to her God. Then, then began her glory! She being crowned with glory, and honour, and immortality, is sat down at God's right hand, to drink at the fountain head of pleasures for evermore.

I must remember, too, many, *many* mercies, which are mixed in this bitter cup. She did not outlive her usefulness: her faculties remained unimpaired; and she has gone to receive her unspeakable reward, before the days of old age arrived in which she would have found no pleasure. Her life and death are lessons which I trust I shall never forget. May they be blessed to me, and to all who knew, or were connected with her: and may we more and more strive to walk at an humble distance in her steps, that our last end may be like hers.

God highly honoured me in appointing me the melancholy duty of attending her. O, such a death-bed! It appeared like the verge of heaven—like waiting in the sanctuary surrounded by angels

and archangels—and above all, a place which the presence of God rendered sacred.

There was never, surely, greater lamentation, than has been made for her by all ranks of society. A funeral sermon was preached on this mournful occasion, on Sunday evening, in her free school: another is to be preached in the church for her dear Ladyship to-morrow; and one in her chapel, at Workington, &c. &c. And, I trust, if it be possible, one at Hope Chapel, by some of your ministers, who knew her exalted character, and real worth.

I am, dear Madam, with respect, your's,

A. NAPIER.

The mortal remains of this eminent servant of God lie interred in the Grey Friars church-yard, Edinburgh; to wait for the morning of the resurrection, when Jesus "shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." A monumental tablet has been erected, on which is the following inscription:—

TO THE MEMORY OF

DAME DARCY BRISBANE,

WIDOW OF

SIR WALTER MAXWELL, OF POLLOCK, BART.

AND YOUNGEST DAUGHTER

OF THE LATE

THOMAS BRISBANE, ESQ. OF BRISBANE.

DIED AT EDINBURGH,

JULY 2, 1810:

Who was equally distinguished for Her exalted piety, benevolence, and Christian virtues; as she was for her amiable disposition and dignified manners. Prov. xxxi. 29.

Now she has dropt her cumbrous clay,
And joyful soars the shining way;
While kindred spirits spread their wings,
And bear her to the King of kings.
Long had she known the Saviour's love,
And fix'd her heart on things above;
Long had she run, with even pace,
A useful—not uncertain race.
With various gifts and graces fraught,
By the unerring Spirit taught,
She warn'd, allur'd, with fervent zeal,
Nor dar'd religion to conceal.
And now she shines in endless light,
In all her Father's glory bright;
A spotless robe to her is given,
And all the glorious joys of heaven;
She sees, with joy, her Saviour's face,
And sings the triumphs of his grace:
Then casts her crown before his throne,
And glory gives to God alone.

This monument is erected by her Nephews, and Trustees, Colonel Brisbane, of Brisbane, and Archibald Swinton, Esq. W.S. as a mark of their affectionate regard.

CHARACTER

OF

LADY MAXWELL.

To pourtray with accuracy the character of Lady Maxwell, certainly required a pencil of more than ordinary ability. "It is true, that a person of inventive mind, or a lively imagination, might draw an *ideal* character, combining whatsoever things are pure, pious, amiable, and of good report; and by applying this to Lady Maxwell, fancy would become *reality*, and fiction would be sober narrative of fact; for her character and conduct would bear him out triumphant. Yet, as there is something peculiar to every person; something which is properly their own, and their ownselves; as untransferable as personal identity, and by which their acquaintance will easily recognise them in the crowd; so the person who has an eye that can catch these peculiarities, and a hand which can throw them on the canvass, each in its proper light, natural attitude, and just proportions, that person is a real painter of character; and to such an one, that of Lady Maxwell would be a subject worthy of the best efforts of his greatest powers."

For the following concentrated view of some

of the many excellencies which were so happily combined in the life and character of this eminent saint, the Editor is indebted to the MEMOIR of his worthy friend alluded to in the preface of this work. It has been preferred to any thing he might have attempted; not only on account of its own intrinsic worth, but also, on account of the following interesting fact. This delineation was drawn, not from an examination of her Ladyship's writings, but from personal observation, and the unanimous testimony of numerous friends. It is, therefore, conceived that it furnishes a most satisfactory proof, that her Ladyship's conversation and deportment strictly corresponded with all that has been met with, in the record of her own experience. Principles were reduced to practice; resolutions formed in the closet had their appropriate influence on the life; and a happy consistency between profession and doing was maintained, which secured the ready assent and approbation of every pious and impartial observer. It has been remarked, that few persons were known to speak of her Ladyship in any other terms than those of "*good* Lady Maxwell." It is a brief but full and striking character of a primitive worthy, by the pen of inspiration,—"He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added to the Lord."*

"Lady Maxwell's person was a little taller than

* Acts xi. 24.

the ordinary size, slender, regular in its form, just in its proportions, and remarkably straight; her complexion inclining a little more to dark than light. Her features quite feminine, yet bold, every line full of meaning, and strongly marked with intelligence. Her eye was quick and penetrating, yet full of sweetness. And when she was bordering on her seventieth year, time had neither impaired her sight, nor drawn furrows on her countenance; while she sat and walked as erect, and moved with as much ease and grace as when in her twentieth year. The amiable part of her manner was scarcely perceived by strangers at first sight, in consequence of a superlative dignity in her mien, which appears to have been so natural, that on very few occasions she could forget it; and this was thought by those who knew her the least, but ill to comport with that high degree of piety to which she laid claim. Acquaintance, however, broke this charm, ventured within the imagined magic circle, and experience corrected the errors of misconception.

"Her *dress*, which was as much dictated by conscience as formed on taste, was *very plain*; being without ornament, or any thing which could serve only for shew; yet it was a plainness of her *own*, equally removed from the formal costume of the Quaker, and the frippery of fashion, escaping at the same time the unconscientious expensiveness of both. She did not

degrade herself from her rank, nor detract from her personal appearance, by this plainness of apparel; but she found that she could relieve many a suffering creature, and give education to many an orphan child, with what numbers expend in useless decorations, whose income was as much below her own, as was their situation in society.

"Her talent for *conversation* was very remarkable, calculated at once to profit and delight. It might be said of her, as Dr. Johnson said of the Rev. John Wesley, "That she spoke well on every subject." For although in one sense she was out of the world, she was by no means unacquainted with it, nor yet of those leading events which in continual succession engage the public mind; while in the early part of her life, she appeared to have amassed a considerable fund of original observation on things, manners, and men. She was also well acquainted with the general circle of British literature in its various departments, and possessed a memory *retentive* of important facts, and *ready* in supplying at the precise moment, the idea or illustration which was then wanted. She had no partiality for controversy on any subject, and mostly avoided disputable points. When, however, she was called to give an opinion on such subjects, she would do it with ease and clearness; and by adverting to the data of her own reasoning—to the procedure of her understanding from one link

to another of that chain of ratiocination which it had formed, she seldom failed to conduct the minds of others to the same conclusions with those of her own. Her command of language in conversation was not less extraordinary; the characteristics of which were, perspicuity, purity, and elegance. Her words, in general, were so well chosen, that a person of taste would have been ready to conclude, that had she ransacked all the Lexicons of the language, she could not have selected words more justly to express her sense, or to convey the precise ideas she intended to communicate, than those which she employed. With the exception of a very slight Scottish accent, her enunciation was as pure and elegant as her language:—her manner of speaking was ease and dignity in the closest combination; she was always ready, but never rapid. She was never observed to faulter, hesitate, or trip in the pronunciation of a word, nor ever to change a word, half expressed, for another which might be deemed more suitable. She was never obtrusive in conversation, and never loquacious; seldom descended from the elevation of her rank and character; and on no occasion transgressed the laws of the best breeding; but by asking pertinent questions, and suggesting useful topics, she rather invited the conversation of others, than monopolized it herself.

"She was perfectly at home on every subject possessed of rational interest; but in every

company, and on every occasion, piety to God, and good-will towards men, were her favourite themes. Religion, indeed, seemed like her native element, in which she lived and moved, encompassing her like an atmosphere, and accompanying her in all her revolutions in the world and the church: every subject was made to converge to, and terminate in, that great *one*, the enjoyment and practice of which is the chief end of man. On the doctrines of the gospel she spoke with clearness and precision; evincing on some occasions a wonderful degree of discrimination. On subjects of Christian *experience*, she would have been the fit and equal companion of a Fenelon, a De Renty, or a Fletcher. The high and deep things of the kingdom of grace were dwelt upon and treated by her with the easiest familiarity. When she expatiated on that grace which had so emptied her of self, so deadened every feeling and affection to the world, and so spiritualized all her mental powers—which had given her union with God so close, and fellowship so intimate; aged Christians appeared in her presence to be children, having only learned the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Her noble conceptions of experimental truths were embodied in language so appropriate and clear; the pious feelings of the Christian were described so rationally and justly, that faith in her seemed to be sense, all spiritual and invisible realities appearing in sight, and God seen by the

eye of a mortal. When dwelling on *practical* religion, piety in her hands assumed a more pious appearance; the reasonableness of godliness became more reasonable, while its native beauty seemed to acquire new and fresher charms. Of very few could it be said with a less degree of poetic license, than of her, that

'Truths divine came mended from her tongue.'

"The conversation of such a person must always have been engaging, instructive, and profitable to pious persons, although it could seldom be enjoyed, even by those, without feeling such a mental and religious inferiority as made them dwindle in their own sight into perfect insignificancy. And if any religious person has experienced feelings different from those of pleasurable in Lady Maxwell's company, let them attribute it to the above-mentioned cause.

"To some persons, perhaps, a part of the above may appear of minor importance. But if the design of biography be not to amuse merely by a relation of striking incident, nor yet solely to perpetuate the memory of the dead, but to *instruct* the living, by an exhibition of models of propriety and excellency—excellency, which is uniform, being carried into the very minutiæ of life, as well as extending to concerns of greater importance; it is to be hoped, that, to younger readers at least, the notice of these things may not be without its use.

"Lady Maxwell's *piety* was sound, deep, and consistent. Her conversion to God was genuine

and clear. *Humility*, which is the first grace implanted in the Christian's mind, and the first feature formed in the Christian's character, and which lies at the root of every other grace, had a conspicuous situation in her temper and conduct. This grace, however, had to display its beauty under some unfavourable circumstances. For as there was nothing in her person, or her early habits, congenial to such a temper, so there was something of such commanding dignity in her whole mein, that it is said, that when very young and at school, she maintained such an overbearing superiority of spirit, as held all her companions in respectful awe, and led them to keep a measured distance. Nor did that mighty moral change which Divine grace had wrought in her soul, completely efface all traces of her early habits. For it may be said, almost without a figure, that there were, on some occasions, such an inexpressible air and dignity in her manner, as might have awed sovereignty itself to a respectful distance, and caused it to sink in conscious inferiority. But all this was in a *manner* the very opposite of that amiable spirit that always breathed in her heart. It is also true, that Lady Maxwell did not generally comply with that custom of *shaking hands* at meeting and parting, which obtains among many religious persons; and some might deem this a want of Christian condescension. But to say nothing of this practice being in many cases a mere formality, it may be necessary here to observe, that

Lady Maxwell cherished the nicest sense of what she conceived to be *propriety* in character and action—studying what was proper for her as a *female*, a Christian, and a lady of rank; considering, at the same time, that what was proper for her in any one of these situations, was not at variance with what was due from her in any of the others. In conversation, for instance, she was never *masculine*. And as the female never was lost in the philosopher or divine, so in action the titled lady was never entirely merged in the Christian. This she would have considered as a departure from propriety, which was neither warranted by the usages of civilized nations, nor demanded by the genius of Christianity.

"Yet that elevated manner which she could assume, was exceedingly useful to her, especially in shortening visits which had ceased to be mutually profitable, by disposing the visitor voluntarily to retire. This to strangers might have an abruptness which often produced disappointment; yet on her part, it was in this instance, habit formed on design. Few persons more fully estimated the value of time, or more sedulously husbanded it than she did; having in this, as in some other things, taken the Father of Methodism for her model. And had she not in some way guarded against the invasion of her time, the number of visitors which she would have had, some drawn by the attractions of her conversation, others to solicit her counsel, and others, perhaps, to impose on her charity by

fabricated tales of woe; would not only have interrupted her regular business, but sensibly diminished her mental and religious improvement. Yet notwithstanding these appearances, she was *humble:* indeed to question this, were to doubt her Christianity. She appears ever to have had such full and clear views of the Divine perfections, and of her own want of conformity to the Divine Image—such extended discoveries of her own religious privileges, and of her disproportionate improvement—such a perception of the attainments of others placed in circumstances less favourable to advance in Christian holiness than her own; as overwhelmed her with a sense of her own unworthiness, and sunk her as into nothing before God. Rank, title, knowledge, and even piety itself, seemed to disappear, while with Job she exclaimed, "Behold I am vile!" If we are to look for further proof of her humility in her *spirit* and temper, which is certainly a more decisive criterion than the shape of a hat, the cut of a coat, or any adventitious circumstance in a person's manners, we shall find it in the submissive spirit in which she bore opposition to her plans, and dissent from her opinions: in the deference which she paid to the judgements and suggestions of others, who were as inferior to herself in mind, as they were below her in life; as also in that child-like temper in which she received religious instruction from the weakest instruments. And if proof of her humility be required in her *actions,* the very circum-

stance of her becoming a member of the Wesleyan society at the *time* she did, her continuing in it in the country where she lived; her being always easy of access, perhaps more so to the poor than to the rich; and the easy familiarity with which she met in class and in private band, and received as friends the visits of some pious females who were pensioners on her bounty—these as a specimen may suffice, instead of volumes.

"*Love*, which ranks the first amongst Christian graces, which includes within itself the whole of religion, and without which, knowledge is empty, and faith is vain; this had a place in her mind worthy of its pre-eminent nature; it was so deeply seated in her heart, so powerful and uniform in its operation, as more to resemble a principle than a passion. Its origin was heavenly, its nature was Divine, and its works were agreeable to that nature, and corresponded with its great source. From the time that she received a concern for a knowledge of Divine things, she desired to love God with all her heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; and that inferior degree of this, of which she was made a partaker when she received the justifying grace of God, only tended more to awaken her concern, inflame her ardour, and invigorate her pursuits of that great Christian enjoyment. Her soul cried out for all the Divine fulness, nor did she cry in vain. She obtained the desire of her heart, in *salvation from all sin*—in the sanctification of her nature unto God—and in his *perfect*

love shed abroad in her heart; and for the space of near thirty years, God reigned the undisputed sovereign of all her affections. Nor is there a doubt in the minds of those who knew her best, that, had her love to God been subjected to the last decisive test, that of dying for his honour, she would, in that case, have braved death, though in the most terrific form, and worn a martyr's crown. As she thus loved God with all her heart, so she loved all his rational offspring, and ever felt disposed, to the utmost of her power and means, to serve their present and eternal interests. She entered with all her soul into every scheme, which had for its object the removal or diminution of any part of the sum of human wretchedness, or to improve the natural or moral condition of her fellow-creatures. And while she was desirous of serving all, she would not injure any. With her the characters of others were as sacred as their property. Speaking evil of the absent was not known in her presence, and even the attempt was very seldom made. Her charity inclined to run to excess; and having formed the best opinion possible of every person, she did not wish to hear any thing which might induce her to make any abatement from that degree of worth at which she had estimated them. She knew too well the proper place for her sex, to take any part in the affairs and government of the church; and as she allowed of no venders of evil reports, she remained ignorant of any little disorder or impropriety which might exist in in-

dividuals; and this undoubtedly contributed much to her own peace. Very different indeed is this from the conduct of those who, under the mistaken idea of indignation against sin, zeal for the purity of the church and the glory of God, allow their habitations to become a rendezvous of religious gossipping, until they form the common sewers of pious scandal.

"Lady Maxwell naturally possessed all that quickness of temper, all that acuteness of feeling, and irritability of spirit, which is almost a characteristic of minds endued with the finest sensibilities. Yet so completely had grace effected a conquest of natural temper, and secured the empire of her passions, that on no occasion did indignation or anger, impatience or warmth of spirit, break that guard which grace had given her over herself. Indeed with so masterly a hand did she rule her own spirit, and that in times of extreme exercise; so conspicuous were her mildness, gentleness, and long-suffering, that her warm natural temper seemed rather to be extinguished than subdued. Old things were passed away, and all things were become new.

"*Joy* in God, joy in the Holy Ghost, and joy unspeakable, are Scripture terms, and are expressive of a Christian grace to which no true believer can be an entire stranger. Yet it has been observed, that this grace is most distinguishable in the first stages of the Christian's experience, when every thing in the world or kingdom of grace wears the face of novelty; and when,

perhaps, that hole of the pit, out of which the hand of mercy has but recently dug the individual, is still gaping in sight. For contrasting his past with his present state, such an one must necessarily feel his mind inspired with joy from an assurance of God's salvation. So it has been remarked further, that in *general*, religious joy is the most sensible in the minds of those persons whose attainments are not the most strikingly marked by their depth or height. And certainly if we are, in any case to determine of our being in a state of salvation by the existence or strength of any of those graces which enrich and adorn the Christian's mind, perhaps there is none more equivocal, less certain as a criterion, or that is so subject to feel the operation of disturbing causes, both from without and within, than that of joy. That supreme love to God, and submission to his authority, which fix the mind into a determination rather to die than to sin, form a much more conclusive proof of our being in a state of acceptance, than any measure of joy which we can feel. On the subject of *religious joy*, Lady Maxwell said but little. For although she was not a stranger to this spiritual enjoyment, and notwithstanding her mental comforts were not subject to those fluctuations which are but too common with many, yet to *rapturous* or *extatic* joy she was a stranger. She would speak, [as she has written] of a solid, settled peace; a Divine tranquillity; an overwhelming sense of the Divine goodness, which rather sunk, than

plated her soul; a losing herself in God; the deep teachings of God's Spirit; an emptying of the mind, and a filling of her soul with love. And at some times she spoke of such a consciousness of the whole Deity drawing near to her in his gracious influences, as caused a heavenly solemnity to pervade all her mental powers, producing, 'That speechless awe which dares not move.' And often she seemed to realize what is expressed in lines, as poetically grand, as the divinity is profound,

> 'Plung'd in the Godhead's deepest sea,
> And lost in his immensity.'

Yet neither in life, nor in death, did she speak of any extraordinary measure of spiritual joy.

"*Her candour.* Although Lady Maxwell was fully established in her own religious sentiments, sentiments which she had drawn from that infallible source of truth, the word of God; and had embraced them from a full *conviction*, which was the result of earnest, but dispassionate examination; yet she did not exclaim, 'The temple of the Lord' alone 'are we,' but indulged the most Christian charity towards all who laid Christ as the foundation, and held him as the Head. She loved and esteemed good people of every religious persuasion; being of opinion, that when the essentials of Christianity are maintained, sentiments in religion form a less considerable part of the thing, than many persons seem to apprehend, or at least, less than most are disposed to grant. As she often attended

that church in which she had been educated, so she often made grateful mention of the profit which she there received; and of various ministers, both of the English and Scottish establishments, as well as of dissenters of both countries who occasionally visited her, she spoke in terms of the highest respect. Yet while she admired the splendour of talent in some, the extent of theological knowledge in many, and reverenced the piety of all; and while she rejoiced that they preached Christ as the only foundation of a sinner's hope, she could not forbear lamenting, that any of them should stop short, by not insisting on every individual *knowing* his personal interest in the Redeemer; and she has moreover observed that some of those with whom she had conversed on that subject, and whose views on other points were strictly evangelical, yet entertained the strongest doubts on the knowledge of salvation, being the common privilege of the children of God. And yet such circumstances as these were adverted to, in such mild and guarded terms, as shewed that she felt it rather as a subject of deep regret, than as affording matter for a sweeping sentence of condemnation. Such persons she believed might be Christians themselves, but were not the most likely to make Christians of others; so that, notwithstanding the superiority of their learning and powers, they would not be the teachers of her Ladyship's choice.

"Nor was her candour less manifested towards

the ministers of her own religious community, than to those of others. In a society organized like that of the Wesleyan Methodists, where the whole connexion is divided into distinct portions, and each portion supplied successively by a change of ministers, of every degree of standing in the work, and every order and variety of talent, both natural and acquired; it must almost necessarily be the case, that the hemisphere of each portion of such a body, must be illuminated at different times, by stars of very different magnitudes; or, that their churches must possess an eloquent Apollos, a consolatory Barnabas, a Boanerges, the thunderer, or a youthful Timothy, in tardy or rapid succession. Amid such changes, Lady Maxwell could not fail to discern some, whose minds possessed a greater elevation and richness than others: some, whose modes of thinking, and whose powers of giving body to conception, and adorning to thought, were more in unison with her own correct taste, than those of others. This she saw and felt; and while she acknowledged, she prized the privilege. For, with the exception of the saving grace of God, and the inward satisfaction arising from doing good to others, she had no delight superior to the intellectual luxury enjoyed under the ministry of the workman that needeth not to be ashamed, who rightly divides the word of truth; yet she never made such men her idols; nor in her attendance on gospel ordinances, gave them a marked preference. The ministry of the young, as well as

the old, the inferior as well as the superior, was attended and listened to by her. It was no subject of inquiry, who is the preacher, but when is the time? And as the expectations of her mind were raised far above all human instruments, so she seldom failed of receiving the end of the ordinance; for although she could not on every occasion calculate on meeting with an intellectual repast, she could always contemplate a spiritual east.

"This lesson, of respecting the person of no teacher, appears to have been learned by her own experience. For we find her, at an early period of her Christian life, sometimes soliciting Mr. Wesley for the appointment or re-appointment of certain preachers of *name* to Edinburgh; but she afterwards learned, as she followed on to know the Lord, that *He* is the proper judge of the fitness of those instruments by which he shall carry on his own work, and promote his own glory. She was ever ready to bestow commendation on whoever in the least deserved it, but the most delicate censure was scarcely known to fall from her lips. And if on some occasions she gave to one teacher greater marks of regard than those shewn to another, it was on account of the *spirit* of the person, or some congeniality of mind with her own, on the subject of Christian experience, rather than on account of superior public talents.

During the space of about forty years, Lady Maxwell was her own chaplain. For some time

after she became acquainted with Divine things, she employed a pious minister of the Scottish Establishment to officiate in that capacity, but with which she soon became dissatisfied. For being placed by Providence at the head of her own household, she considered that that relation imposed upon her the performance of certain duties, which could not be discharged by proxy; and of which duties, that of conducting family worship she esteemed as not the least. It was not, however, without much reasoning and considerable conflict, that duty and conscience triumphed over spurious shame and false delicacy. But having once overcome reluctance, and begun the practice, she found an ample reward; duty became privilege, and the work was wages. When she was in health, she read the Scriptures, and prayed extempore with her whole family morning and evening; and in these exercises, not only evinced the fervour of her devotion, but displayed the resources of a mind, richly furnished out of the Divine treasury. For to some of those persons who had been in the habit of joining with her in family worship for many years, and who were very adequate to detect any thing like a form or sameness in her manner, it was astonishing, what an almost endless variety, both in petition and expression, she always had at command. Nor was there any appearance of a falling off in the latter part of her life, when it might have been expected, that infirmities and age

would have considerably impaired the energies of her mind.

"To talk of a good man or woman, who does no good, is to talk about a monster of imagination, which has no positive existence. 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction.' 'For whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?' It will not be unto such as say, 'Lord, Lord, bless thy holy Name,' that the Judge will award that plaudit, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you,' but to those who have fed, and clothed, and visited his necessitous and suffering members. This is not merely a proof of the existence and reality of inward religion, the ripe fruit of piety; but it is religion itself, a resemblance of the Divine goodness; and all the apparatus of redemption is constructed, and all the regenerating influences of the Spirit are employed on the mind, to infuse the disposition, to fix the principle, and impart the moral power, to continue patient in well-doing. There was no trait in Lady Maxwell's character more prominent and fair, than her *benevolence*. Her ardent desire for getting good by constant recourse to the Saviour's fulness, was not more intense, than her wish to be useful to her fellow-creatures; and perhaps very few ex-

amples have occurred, of means so comparatively limited, being husbanded so well, as to produce such a quantum of benefit to mankind.

"Her pecuniary resources, especially during the latter part of her life, were not the most abundant, considering the rank and station which she had to uphold in society. For although she might be left a widow in affluent circumstances, yet being a dowager lady, confined to a fixed income, the depreciation of the value of money in more than half a century, must considerably have curtailed her means of doing good. But she saved all that she could, for the sole purpose of giving, and by the latter her funds were constantly kept low. She was, as has been noticed, singularly plain in her dress, genteely frugal in her household, and thus, by avoiding every useless expence, she acquired the power of conferring more in charity, than many possess with ten times her income. And all that was in her power to do, she did to the very utmost. There was scarcely a human institution, or a private or public charity, whether for the repose of age, or the instruction of youth, the relief of indigence, or the help of sickness; for the reformation of morals, or the spread and support of religion, from which she did not receive applications, and to which she did not contribute. She erected and supported a school, in which, at the time of her death, about eight hundred children received a good education; and each a copy of the Scriptures on leaving the school.

And such were the encouraging effects produced by this school, as induced her Ladyship, by Will, to provide for its continuance to the end of time. As she was prepared for every good work, the subject of her charities is an almost endless one. Could the dead arise, and would the living speak, the poor she has helped, the sick she has relieved, the orphans protected, and the friendless assisted,—embarrassed honest tradesmen that she raised above difficulty, modest merit which she brought into notice,—the youth which she instructed, and set out in the world;—could these, or would they speak, an army would rise to bless her memory. But she not only employed her money, but her tongue, which was persuasive,—her pen, which was urgent,—and her influence, which was mild, but powerful, among her friends, to obtain their assistance. And it has been said, that there was no sum which she gave, however small, no institution which she patronized, nor an individual, who became the object of her charity, but what she followed with particular, earnest prayer to God, that what she had done might receive his blessing."

THE END.

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